JULIA DE GRAMONT.

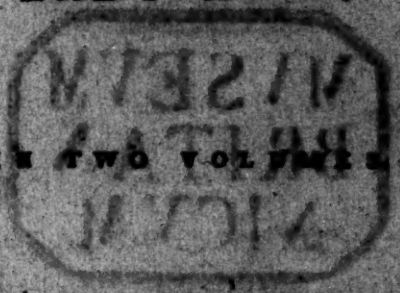
VOL. II.

JULIA DE GRAMONT,

BY

THE RIGHT HONORABLE

LADY H****.



IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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MVSEVM
BRITAN
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JULIA DE GRAMONT.

LEONORA, by every art of winning gentleness and fondest love, endeavoured to restore his long-lost happiness to her Augustus, who gratefully received each mark of her affection, and returned them by the most delicate attention to her wishes. He endeavoured to conceal his inquietude with the smiles of content; and banished to

the ſecret receſſes of his heart the unextinguiſhed embers of his fatal paſſion.

The Baron de Neuville felt for him a tenderneſs little inferior to parental ſentiments; and, unable to part with his darling Leonora, prevailed upon the Chevalier to promiſe a conſtant reſidence with him.

Several weeks had paſſed on in a ſcene of tranquillity, uninterrupted, when a courier from the Caſtle de Soiſſons brought a moſt alarming ſummons to the Chevalier. A diſorder had attacked the Marquis, which, although its firſt ſymptoms had threatened no danger, yet had, in the courſe of a few days,

days, reduced him to the brink of the grave; and, being ſenſible of his approaching end, he wiſhed to embrace Auguſtus once more before his eyes were cloſed for ever. What were the emotions of this amiable ſon! the thought of loſing ſo invaluable a parent deeply touched his ſuſceptible heart; and he delayed not a moment to obey the call of nature and of duty. Leonora, ſharing the anguiſh of her lord, diſſolved in tears, embraced her father, who reluctantly ſubmitted to her accompanying the Chevalier on his mournful expedition.

They were met at the entrance of the Caſtle de Soiſſons by Ma-

dame de Tourville: her eyes were ſwollen with weeping. Upon the Chevalier's fearfully inquiring after the Marquis, "Alas!" replied ſhe, "we muſt loſe your admirable fa-"ther! the hand of death is on "him: exert your utmoſt forti-"tude to ſupport his laſt farewell. "Convinced of his inevitable fate, "but calm and recollected, he is "anxious to beſtow on you his pa-"rental bleſſing. Your brothers "too are ſent for to receive his "generous pardon."

The ſenſibility of Auguſtus was too deeply affected to interrupt Madame de Tourville: he ſunk in a window-ſeat, and yielded for ſome moments to the heart-rending anguiſh of filial regret and tender-

neſs.

neſs. An old grey-headed domeſtic, who was the Marquis's principal attendant, approached the Chevalier. The trace of ſorrow marked his venerable countenance; unable to articulate, he bowed in ſilence; and, pointing to the door that led to his maſter's apartment, made ſigns to ſignify that he was expected there. Auguſtus aroſe, and, following his ſpeechleſs guide, ſlowly advanced towards the awful chamber of impending death. Du Bois gently opened a door, and, preceding his ſteps, conducted him through the anti-room to that of this dying and lamented parent.

With what acute emotions was Auguſtus penetrated! The Mar-

quis, pale and emaciated, lay extended on a couch, for which he had exchanged his reſtleſs bed. The pillows beneath him were ſupported by the moſt expreſſive figure of genuine woe, in the form of Julia! — her head reclined to reſt the cheek of her expiring lord; and, animated alone by the pearly dew of ſenſibility, her countenance might have been miſtaken for the lifeleſs repreſentation of ſorrow in monumental marble.

The audible ſobs of his afflicted ſon attracted the notice of this departing parent. He raiſed his cloſing eyes; he fixed them benignly on the Chevalier, and extended one feeble hand to draw him

to his embrace—"Oh, my excel-
"lent child!" he faintly uttered,
"thou art come! and I shall die
"content. I have offered up my
"humble prayer for a sufficient in-
"terval of life and senses to fold
"thee to my heart, and to bless thee
"for the unremitted testimonies of
"thy filial duty!"—He pauſed, and ſeemed labouring to diſcloſe ſome important truth! The Chevalier, oppreſſed with the force of ſorrow, could only anſwer with his tears, which bedewed the hand he gently claſped in his.

The Marquis at length reſumed, "Thy brothers!—but, alas! they "have no claim to that endearing "name; nor blood nor friendſhip

" have allied them to thee! — for,
" oh! my beloved Auguſtus! in
" this awful moment, when fate
" is going to ſeparate us for ever! —
" though repugnant to my feel-
" ings, I find myſelf impelled to
" confeſs, in mitigation of thy
" tender grief, — that, in regretting
" my loſs, thou wilt mourn a
" friend, but not a father!" —
" Ah, Sir!" — exclaimed the Che-
valier — " what is it I hear! —
" vainly wouldeſt thou attempt to
" deceive the ſtrongeſt ties of na-
" ture! — my heart cannot diſown
" thee as a father! — I feel I am
" thy ſon! — caſt me not off — diſ-
" claim me not — oh, my reſpect-
" able parent!"

" Thou

" Thou art my ſon!" returned the Marquis (ſtrongly moved) — " my dear, my adopted ſon! but, " alas!—thy birth was not derived " from me!—Heaven bleſſed me " not with ſuch a ſon!—oh, that " it had! and that my name and " honours might have legally de- " ſcended to merit ſo approved! " but I have ſecured thy virtues " beyond the reach of envy and " revenge—I am enabled, without " injuſtice to my ſucceſſors, to be- " queath thee a portion ſufficient " to ſupport the rank in which " thou haſt been educated—mayeſt " thou live long, reſpected and " beloved!—and may that power " ſupreme, who ſummons me from " hence,

" hence, guard thee from ill, and
" crown with uninterrupted happi-
" neſs thy nuptial ſtate!

" The Marchioneſs — that beſt
" of women and of wives — is
" my ſole executrix — aſſiſted by
" the Count de Senanges, ſhe
" will do thee every juſtice. —
" In this paper," drawing a pac-quet from his boſom, " thou
" wilt find the ſtory which con-
" cerns thy birth — neither time
" nor ſtrength will allow me to
" enter myſelf upon ſo intereſting
" a detail — commend me to thy
" Leonora, and ſhare with her my
" warmeſt bleſſings!"

At this moment the ſolemn ſcene was ſuddenly interrupted by the entrance of the phyſicians who attended

tended the Marquis.—During the time that the aſtoniſhed Chevalier was liſtening to a recital which deprived him of a parent, various were the emotions of Julia!—inadvertently, for one inſtant, her eyes met thoſe of him to whom ſhe was no longer mother!—and, for one intoxicating moment, the eccſtaſy of that thought overcame even the force of grief itſelf, and rendered them inſenſible to any other idea!—but the attention of the Marchioneſs to her dying lord, and thoſe of Auguſtus to his generous benefactor, ſoon triumphed over this involuntary reflection. Exhauſted with the exertion his ſpirits had undergone, the Marquis felt the hour

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of fate approaching — he took a tender and affecting leave of his beloved Julia, who was ſupported ſenſeleſs from the ſcene of death! — This amiable man, who, in his days of health, had arranged every worldly circumſtance, now raiſed all his pious thoughts from earth to heaven! — he requeſted the ſurrounding mourners to diſperſe, and to leave him during the laſt important moment with his confeſſor, in whoſe reverend arms he yielded up his guiltleſs ſoul without a ſigh!

When this fatal event was known throughout the caſtle, an awful mute dejection reigned in every heart and countenance! — As the Marquis had lived beloved, ſo he di-

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ed lamented!—Madame de Tourville and Leonora tenderly watched over the Marchioneſs, who felt all the force of undiſſembled ſorrow for a huſband who had attached her to him by every grateful ſentiment.

About an hour after the cloſing ſcene, the new Marquis, with his brother and the bride of the former, made their public entry into the caſtle; their filial lamentations were but the mockery of woe — real unconcern was written in legible characters upon each countenance. The Marquis, who expected to be received by the widow of his father with the ſame inſenſibility which compoſed his own

own unfeeling heart, ſent her notice of his arrival, and that of the Marchioneſs de Soiſſons, requeſting her appearance. Shocked at ſuch an embaſſy, and incapable of complying with their ſummons, ſhe entreated Madame de Tourville to deſcend to theſe haughty gueſts, and to inform them that in her preſent ſtate of affliction retirement was her choice; but that her domeſtics ſhould receive commands to pay them every due attention and reſpect during the time they propoſed honouring the caſtle with their preſence.—The proud Marquis reddened at this reply, and ironically ſaid, he was obliged to Madame de Soiſſons for information

tion that himself and his family were visitors in that mansion, since he had, till that moment, been ignorant that he was not himself the master of it — "However," continued he, "the testament of the "deceased will decide with more "propriety a dubious circumstance; "tell then this fair inconsolable "that, as her presence will be ne-"cessary at the opening of the will, "I hope she will pay that respect "to my father's memory not to "delay the ceremony later than "this evening; since his com-"mands, just or unjust, ought "to be put into immediate exe-"cution." During this feeling speech his haughty wife sat lolling

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in a chair with ſullen dignity, without deigning to make the ſlighteſt inclination of the head to Madame de Tourville, though ſhe ſurveyed her minutely with an imperious ſtare: that amiable woman, unabaſhed by a deportment which could only excite her contempt, eyed the Marchioneſs with ſuch a look of perfect indifference, that ſhe appeared ſenſibly mortified at her neglected conſequence — however, ſhe affected ſtill a careleſs air — but the bluſh of wounded pride demonſtrated that malice dictated her addreſs to the Marquis in theſe words — "Oh, my dear lord! "you muſt inſiſt upon obtaining "for me an introduction — I am "abſolutely

"absolutely dying with impa-
"tience, to pay my duty to our
"beauteous mother, and to behold
"those charms which had the
"power to thaw the frozen heart
"of age!—But tell her, Madam,
"if you are honoured with the
"confidence of this widowed fair,
"she must not dim the lustre of
"her eyes with tears—she must
"reserve their beams to conquer
"youthful slaves."

A smile of disdain was all the reply Madame de Tourville made; and she quitted the room in silence just as the worthy ecclesiastic entered, who had so recently closed the eyes of the best of men. A placid serenity, the result of a long

life of piety and devotion, marked his venerable aſpect. He advanced, with unaſſuming dignity, towards the young Marquis, and thus accoſted him: "I come, Sir, to "fulfil the laſt commands of your "expiring father: he charged me "to tranſmit to you that benedic-"tion, and forgiveneſs, which the "ſudden termination of his exiſt-"ence permitted him not perſon-"ally to beſtow, upon yourſelf and "brother." — "For his bleſſing, "reverend father," interrupted the Marquis, "we are obliged, as to "his forgiveneſs, he reaps himſelf "that benefit; it was an act requi-"ſite for a dying Chriſtian, to quit "the world in charity with all "mankind;

" mankind; nor could he other-
" wiſe have a claim to perfect ab-
" ſolution from his own ſins and
" errors."

" Errors," replied the prieſt;
" are inſeparable from humanity;
" but the virtues of the exalted pat-
" tern we have loſt greatly over-
" balanced thoſe trivial failings;
" which, in a contrary character,
" increaſe with the vices of the
" heart till they, unchecked, be-
" come enormities! — But the ſon
" of ſuch a father ſhould inherit
" his ſhining virtues with his ſplen-
" did patrimony — ſhould purſue
" the bright example of conſpi-
" cuous merit — and, to be as great,
" ſhould learn to be as good!

Sullen rage deformed the visage of the Marquis.—"And what "art thou," he cried, "who, with "officious zeal and insolent re"proaches, presumest to arraign "my conduct, opposing to it the "panegyric of a father!—thy false "devotion is a cloak for every "crime that offers its temptation; "but never can impose on me.—"Away, and know thy reign is "ended—the ear that listened to "thy flattering blandishments is "closed—thy influence is no more; "but that thou art below revenge, "thou shouldest feel the weight of "my resentment.—Be gone, and "never let me see that hoary face "again."

Unmoved,

Unmoved, the venerable father viewed the headstrong passion of impetuous youth! — he was armed with conscious rectitude and fearless innocence — he shook his silver head, and, with a countenance of divine composure, "I go," said he, "and shall not fail to offer up "my humble prayers, that the all-"wise disposer of the sons of men "may change thy heart — pour his "enlightening grace upon thee — "and restore thee to thyself. — "Farewell, my son! — mayest thou, "ere the night of age creeps on, "regain the path from which thou "hast unfortunately strayed; and, "ere too late, reform!"

He fixed an expreſſive look of pity on the Marquis, and left him in ſome degree confounded by the calm ſerenity he had failed to exaſperate, and ſecretly aſhamed of his illiberal treatment of a man whoſe blameleſs character and holy function demanded a contrary reception.

The afflicted Chevalier, who mourned the Marquis with all the tenderneſs of filial affection, had retired into his cloſet to vent an unfeigned agony of ſorrow. The peculiar delicacy of his feelings and ſituation would not permit him to appear before the widowed Julia; but he had ſent a reſpectful inquiry after her health, and had the conſolation of hearing that ſhe was

recovered

recovered from that ſtate of inſenſibility which had overwhelmed her ſenſes during the laſt awful ſcene.

The grief of the Marchioneſs did not expreſs itſelf in the oſtentatious diſplay of clamorous and artificial woe—it was tender—it was natural—it proceeded from a heart replete with ſenſibility, and warm with gratitude. She mourned, the trueſt friend and the moſt kind protector; and ſhed to his memory the genuine tears of undiſſembled and ſincere regret.

Leonora, who, in compliance with the fervent entreaties of Auguſtus, had left him, though reluctantly, to the private indulgence of his ſorrows, requeſted at length an

interview, with a voice of gentle earneſtneſs. He anſwered not till ſhe named the Marchioneſs, aſſuring him ſhe came charged with her expreſs commands. That ſound was irreſiſtible; the fair petitioner obtained admittance, and urged a requeſt from Julia, that he would, with Leonora, deſcend to the family party below, who were entitled to the due formalities of reſpect, and who might, in witneſſing their real affliction, attempt to wear the maſk of ſorrow in a houſe where a parent's ſacred remains were ſcarcely cold. Though the Chevalier, from various motives, wiſhed to avoid the preſence of thoſe who had ever envied him,

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even while ſuppoſed allied to him by nature, yet he made a painful effort to obey the Marchioneſs; and the arrival of the Count and Counteſs de Senanges inſpired him with new reſolution, and afforded him a ſenſible conſolation. After the Count had paid a ſhort and affecting viſit to the beauteous relict of his lamented friend, he haſtened to join the diſconſolate Adelaide. Having both mutually wept the fatal event which occaſioned their preſent mournful meeting, they repaired to the eating hall, where they found this feeling family riſing from table. With cold civility the Marquis received the Count and Chevalier; and, inſtead of condoling with

with them on the death of an invaluable parent, preſented, in great formality, his bridal Marchioneſs; who, elated with her rank, and vain of fancied conſequence, haughtily returned their diſtant ſalutes. When Leonora made her appearance, Madame de Soiſſons, with the freedom of conſcious ſuperiority, took her hand, and, affecting an air of condeſcenſion, thanked heaven that it had at laſt ſent her a companion of her own ſex: then, with a vivacity in her look and geſture, which would have better ſuited the ſcene of feſtivity than the houſe of death, ſhe moved towards the gardens, requeſting Leonora to conduct her round them:

them; — that fair afflicted, whoſe countenance partook of the ſenſibility of her heart, followed the Marchioneſs with reluctant ſteps; and, rather guided than guiding, accompanied her into a parterre, where the depredations of deſtructive autumn ſeemed mournfully to proclaim the dying ſeaſon, and the general loſs.

Leonora was ſo abſorbed by her own reflections, that ſhe had advanced ſome paces before ſhe recollected ſhe was herſelf a total ſtranger at the caſtle of Soiſſons, having, upon the preſent ſad occaſion, made her firſt viſit to its lamented owner. She was juſt going to impart this circumſtance as an excuſe

excuſe for quitting the Marchioneſs, when a ſudden ſhower of rain naturally relieved her from her employment. Madame de Soiſſons flew with rapidity to the caſtle, where, having arrived ſome moments before Leonora, ſhe threw open a ſaſh in the ſaloon, and ſtood enjoying, in a burſt of unreſtrained laughter, the inconveniencies her diſtanced companion ſuffered from the ſtorm.

The widowed Marchioneſs, who, from the report of Madame de Tourville, felt an invincible repugnance to admit into her preſence the unworthy ſons of her lamented lord, entreated the Count de Senanges to diſpenſe with her appear-

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ance during the ſolemn meeting in the evening, and to excuſe her, under pretence of indiſpoſition, from attending a ceremony which muſt, from many circumſtances, aggravate her affliction, and might probably expoſe her to inſults from thoſe whom ſhe would wiſh to reſpect for the ſake of him who was their father. The Marchioneſs proceeded then, while a momentary bluſh traverſed her languid cheek, to requeſt the Count would make a public declaration before the Marquis, that Auguſtus was an adopted ſon, and that, though he no longer had a claim to that endearing name of brother, yet that the beſt of men and fathers, in re-

warding

garding his virtues with paternal tenderneſs, had equally diſtinguiſhed him in his will. "I know their "envy, I know their malice," continued ſhe; "they will attempt to "wound the delicacy of the Che-"valier, by diſclaiming all future "connexion with him: — but tell "them, Count, his conſequence "canot be derived from their alli-"ance."

As ſhe ſpoke ſhe fixed her ſweet and dewy eyes upon the ground, to elude any penetrating look which the amiable Senanges, from a knowledge of her former ſentiments, might have caſt upon her. The poſſeſſions of the late Marquis being immenſe, he was empowered to indulge his generoſity towards his

his lovely widow, and adopted ſon, without injuſtice to his children. — But, notwithſtanding the wealth which the two brothers inherited, their abject intereſted ſouls reproached, in bitter terms, the memory of a father! Though the chateau de Soiſſons was leſs extenſive and magnificent than the reſt of his numerous houſes, yet his illiberal ſucceſſor openly upbraided the Marchioneſs for permitting her lord to bequeath it to her even for life. Little did he conceive the diſintereſted ſentiments of Julia's ſoul. Having reſolved to paſs the firſt year of her widowhood either with her ſiſter or at a convent, ſhe made a voluntary reſignation of

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this diſputed manſion, which was, with a mean avidity, accepted. She acquainted him, through the Count, that, when every honour due to the memory of the Marquis was performed, it was her intention to retire with the Counteſs de Senanges, and to leave him at liberty to take poſſeſſion of a place which had now no charms for her.

As Julia was determined to depoſit the ſacred remains of her huſband among the monuments of his anceſtors with funereal pomp, her departure was naturally retarded longer than the Marquis wiſhed; but the forms of decency kept his impatience within proper bounds; and the ſatisfaction he felt

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in his approaching acquiſition, made him conduct himſelf with tolerable decorum: he even checked his Marchioneſs for frequently expreſſing her ennui at the tedious ſolemnity of the mournful ſcenery: the diſmal drapery of death — its gloomy tapers—and its ſilent horrors—were ill adapted to the levity of her diſpoſition. She endeavoured to divert the lingering hours in the ſociety of Leonora, who herſelf began to find affliction irkſome, and to wiſh for an opportunity of partaking in thoſe public amuſements, deſcribed by her new companion in alluring colours.

Though the Marchioneſs at firſt ſight ſeemed devoid of every grace,

and prepoſſeſſed Leonora with no very favourable ſentiments, yet ſhe was ſo far miſtreſs of the wiles of diſſimulation, that where ſhe wiſhed to pleaſe ſhe could be dangerouſly inſinuating: fatally for her young and inexperienced friend, ſhe by imperceptible degrees gained a powerful influence over her mind. Leonora grew weary of offering rejected conſolation to a diſconſolate huſband, who ſhunned her preſence, and, ſeeking ſolitude, left her at liberty to converſe with thoſe who were qualified only to vitiate a weak and inconſiderate heart.

In the apartments of the widowed Marchioneſs there reigned a ſtill ſolemnity, unſuitable to the gaiety of

of Leonora: and when, infected by a momentary impulse, she appeared before her new preceptress with a dejected countenance, she was received with ironical smiles, accompanied by an interrogation, whether she was really become the dupe of artificial sorrow—and if she could rationally believe that so young and beautiful a widow was sincere in regretting the dissolution of an union so very unequal? The volatile Leonora gave easy access to these artful insinuations, and began to form a less perfect idea of that character she had hitherto regarded in the highest point of view; nor did she blush to accuse the innocent and virtuous Julia of affecting the

of grief, while her heart ſecretly rejoiced at liberty regained. Madame de Senanges, to whoſe friendſhip the ungrateful Leonora owed the hand of Auguſtus, became totally neglected by her: ſhe dreaded her juſt reproaches, and conſciouſly avoided the ſilent cenſures of her awful eyes. Madame de Tourville's ſerious turn of mind (the effect only of her misfortunes) was peculiarly repugnant to Leonora's diſpoſition, and ſhe conſidered her gentle admonitions as the formal precepts of advancing age.—Thus was the artful Marchioneſs the choſen and dangerous companion of her ſocial hours: the Marquis and his brother likewiſe paid her flattering attentions;

tentions; her muſical talents rendered her a moſt agreeable addition to their preſent contracted circle; and her uncommon beauty captivated the eye, while her ſoft harmony charmed the ear.

The ſtrange diſcovery of the dying Marquis had increaſed the miſery of Auguſtus, and revived the ſmothered flame of unextinguiſhed love!—He found himſelf releaſed from one fatal barrier to his hopes, only to ſhew the remaining obſtacle in a ſtill ſtronger light: while he conſidered Julia as united to a father, he ſubmitted with ſome degree of reſignation to his fate; but the recent diſavowal of that filial tie awakened him to a more poignant

ſenſe of anguiſh;—from being in different to Leonora, he began to view her with eyes of averſion, and with a mortifying coldneſs rejected her attentions. So abſorbed was he in the contemplation of his wayward fate, that he was quite regardleſs of the paper to which the Marquis had referred him; and, totally incurious about the circumſtances relative to his birth, he had careleſsly thrown it into a cabinet, where it remained unopened.

Pride had ſome ſhare in this extraordinary negligence. Dreading that obſcure connexions might prove him unworthy of adoring his beloved Julia, and of the hopes to which he had once aſpired, he dared not

not to dive into the myſtery of his extraction. Madame de Tourville, whoſe friendſhip for Auguſtus was warm and ſincere, would ſometimes rally him on his inattention. At length, tired with her importunities, he one day reſigned the paper into her hands, aſſuring her that his firm reliance on her fidelity gained her this confidence; he concluded by conjuring her that, if ſhe found his birth ignoble, ſhe would be ſilent even to him, and return the manuſcript ſealed up, as ſhe received it: —that, in ſuch a caſe, ignorance was his choice; and, not wiſhing to know the peculiar circumſtances of his diſgrace, he was reſolved to hide in ſome foreign kingdom his

degraded head. Madame de Tourville ſmiled at his eagerneſs; "Ah! "reſt aſſured," ſhe ſaid, "a haughty "ſoul like yours is ſprung from no- "ble blood." — "If it ſhould be "otherwiſe," replied he with emo- "tion, as you value my honour and "my peace of mind, inform not the "adored idol of my heart that the "man, who was once diſtinguiſhed "by her preference, is become an "object unworthy of her!"—"Re- "member," returned Madame de Tourville gravely, "that this idol "of your heart is, or ought to be, "your wife; and ſhe is too tenderly "attached, to ſuffer birth or ex- "traction to influence her ſenti- "ments."

" ments." Auguſtus was prevented from making a reply by the entrance of the new Marchioneſs with Leonora; when, having paid ſome cold civilities to them, he withdrew to ruminate upon his extraordinary ſituation. Madame de Tourville retired to her cloſet, where ſhe had cautiouſly depoſited the manuſcript, determined not to examine its contents till after the interment of the Marquis.

The lovely Julia remained conſtantly in her apartment; nor could ſhe be perſuaded to diſſipate her ſorrow by mixing with the family circle: ſhe dreaded, more than ever, encountering the Chevalier. The diſcloſure of his birth yielded her

her a ſecret conſolation; but, while it ſeemed to render her attachment leſs guilty, her delicacy of ſentiment ſuffered her not to admit the moſt diſtant hope of ever being united to Auguſtus.

The evening before the funeral obſequies were to be performed, a melancholy impulſe led her to take a laſt farewell of her lord's cold remains. She found an opportunity, when the Counteſs and Madame de Tourville were abſent, (who ſhe thought might have oppoſed her deſign) to ſteal from her apartment; and, directed by the glimmering tapers which, with ſad ſolemnity, illumined the caſtle, ſhe approached

approached the awful chamber of eternal ſleep.

Auguſtus, from the ſame ſympathy of grateful affection, at an oppoſite door was entering the room where, encloſed within his laſt habitation, repoſed the lifeleſs Marquis.—The attendants, who perceived the Marchioneſs advance, reſpectfully withdrew into the antichamber.

The Chevalier, with trembling emotion, beheld the beauteous widow move; and, faſcinated to the ſpot, ſtood, transfixed, to gaze upon her more than mortal lovelineſs!—her ſable robe flowed with unſtudied elegance, which added graces to her inimitable form.

As

As ſhe approached the coffin her countenance was awfully diſtreſſed: ſhe fixed upon the ſerene and lifeleſs features of her lord a look of animated woe; then, melting into tears, ſhe thus addreſſed him — "Dear, ſacred relics of the moſt "eſteemed of men, adieu! — and, "if thy hovering ſpirit can from "its bleſt abode look down upon "the unfortunate Julia—let it wit-"neſs the ſacred vow ſhe breathes. "True to thy honoured, thy re-"ſpected memory, never ſhall this "widowed hand —" At that inſtant the frantic Chevalier, ruſhing forward, ſunk at the feet of the aſtoniſhed Marchioneſs. — "Oh, "cruel, faithleſs Julia!" he exclaimed;

claimed; "is it thus that thou "wouldeſt keep thoſe vows in- "violate, which promiſed once to "the deſpiſed Auguſtus ecſtatic "happineſs!—Ah, ſince fate no "more impoſes, by parental claims, "the reluctant ſilence of a love "like mine, would that ſeraphic "tongue pronounce a vow irrevo- "cable!"—"How, Chevalier!" in- terrupted the Marchioneſs, freeing herſelf, with difficulty, from the graſp of her diſtracted lover, and recoiling precipitately—"is this a "ſcene—is that an object—for ſuch "unhallowed converſe!—and dares "the ungrateful Auguſtus inſult "the ſacred ſilence of that ho-

"noured

" noured corſe with the raſh ve-
" hemence of an impious paſſion!
" — Leave me — fly me — and, in
" the preſence of an injured wife,
" repent thy guilty frenzy!"

She turned from him; and, while the awful dignity of offended virtue beamed in the radiance of her eyes, ſhe darted a glance of ſuch piercing reproof upon the kneeling Chevalier, that he remained on the ground without the power of ſuing her forgiveneſs, or oppoſing her departure. — As ſhe withdrew he gazed after her till ſhe vaniſhed from his ſight.

He then ſuddenly ſtarted up, and exclaimed — " Oh, ſhe is gone!
" and thou, wretched Auguſtus! art
" become,

"become, through thy own un-
"governable folly, the object of
"abhorrence and contempt!—con-
"tempt from Julia!—Ah! thought
"intolerable!—but" (lowering his voice) "let me check theſe tran-
"ſports; complaints are profana-
"tion here." With folded arms he ſtood for ſome moments, contemplating the clay-cold Marquis: death had not diveſted his benign features of the placid ſmile that animated his living countenance—"Oh, bleſt repoſe!" ſoftly uttered Auguſtus—"happy ſtate of endleſs
"peace!—freed from the cares of
"exiſtence, thy faultleſs ſoul is
"flown to that land where ſorrows
"are no more!—there to receive
"the

"the glorious crown of virtue!—
"while I, thy miſerable adopted
"ſon, am left a prey to wretched-
"neſs and ſcorn!"—He turned away, heaved from the bottom of his heart a ſigh profound, and bent his ſteps to his apartment. When the Marchioneſs had reached her ſofa ſhe ſunk upon it, and burſt into an agony of tears!—a lover, whom ſhe ſtill adored, recurred to her imagination, kneeling at her feet. Enough had ſhe ſacrificed to duty and to honour in the ſharp rebuke with which ſhe quitted him—her tenderneſs revived, and ſhe now became more acutely ſenſible that the Chevalier was yet poſſeſſor of her heart.

"Ah,

"Ah, loved Auguſtus!" ſhe ſoftily exclaimed, "why does thy dear "idea haunt my guilty mind— "why, in this awful hour, when "gratitude demands each tear as "tributes due to a revered, a gene-"rous huſband—why do they flow "for thee?—loſt!—unworthy Ju-"lia!—extract this fatal paſſion "from thy boſom, or die in the at-"tempt!"—The Counteſs de Senanges entered at this period: ſhe had miſſed, and ſought her ſiſter; had traced her to the ſcene of decorated woe, and found her now diſſolved in tears.—"Ah, my Julia!" ſhe cried, "wherefore did you elude "my vigilance to ſeek a ſpot which "offered to your view a ſpectacle

"of sadness!"—Forgive me, oh my "Henrietta," replied the beauteous mourner, —"I shall offend your "tenderness no more.—I have bade "a long and last adieu to him, whose "virtues must ever survive in my "remembrance—It was a debt in-"cumbent on my gratitude, and "the performance of it has eased "me of a weight of care.—To-"morrow he will be borne for "ever from my sight, and in the "cold enclosure of a tomb for ages "rest!"

The succeeding day, with mournful solemnity, the slow procession moved; and the lamented Marquis was deposited among his ancestors.

The

The cries of poverty, the sighs of the afflicted, the groans of the oppressed, his bounty had relieved, followed to the tomb these loved remains! — they mourned their patron, their protector, friend! — His sad domestics drooped their heads; and, with silent grief, supported to his grave their ever regretted master, whose character was written in the tears of every eye; and his fame rebounded by that only enviable panegyric — the sympathetic sorrow of each feeling heart!

The departure of the Marchioness from the castle de Sorrons was fixed for the day succeeding that of the funeral obsequies. The Count de Senanges, whom his

ſiſter had intruſted to examine the private cabinets of the late Marquis, amongſt various trinkets found a ſmall caſket ſealed, and addreſſed to Auguſtus. He inſtantly ſought his friend, and found him walking penſively on the terrace: the Count preſented him with the caſket; — with incurious eyes he viewed it, ſighed, and careleſsly placed it in his boſom. — "Whence comes it, Chevalier," ſaid his friend, "that you diſco-"ver ſo much indifference relative "to your birth?" — "It ariſes," replied he mournfully, "from my "indifference to life: am I not an "outcaſt? reared by the hand of "charity, unconnected with the "world —

"world — loſt to happineſs — the
"victim of deſpair! — I would be
"for ever ignorant of an origin
"which expoſed to the ſhafts of
"fortune a very wretch indeed!"
"You are to blame," replied the
Count; "whatever may be your
"deſcent, reſpectable by educa-
"tion, exalted by native worth,
"and diſtinguiſhed by fortune —
"you owe to the lovely woman
"who has united her fate to yours,
"as well as to yourſelf, a diſco-
"very ſo important." — "Aye,
"there's my ſting," returned the
Chevalier with a look of diſtraction,
"that ſyren has undone me: but
"for her, what ecſtatic hopes
"might I not now have formed!

"Ah, no; presumptuous wretch!
"would thy offered, thy ignoble
"hand have been accepted by that
"Julia, whose illustrious birth,
"and honourable blood, should
"scorn thy vows, and spurn thy
"base alliance." He walked a few paces from the Count, in the strongest agitation; then approaching him again, and softening his accent—"Forgive, my more than
"brother, the wildness of despair;
"I cannot be ungrateful to thy
"friendship;—if then thy faithful
"affection yet finds an interest in
"my unfortunate destiny, Ma-
"dame de Tourville can inform
"you all my story: in her hand
"I placed the important manu-
"script.—

"ſcript.—Go then, my dear Se-
"nanges, learn from that fatal
"paper a ſecret of which I would
"be ever ignorant."—The bluſh
of native pride and conſcious dig-
nity glowed on his cheek; he
haſtily turned from the Count, who
quitted him to go in purſuit of
Madame de Tourville. He found
her in the pavilion with Leonora,
to whom ſhe had been mildly re-
preſenting ſome impropriety in
her late conduct, to which ſhe was
endeavouring to attribute the ſud-
den coldneſs and reſerve which ſhe
complained of in her huſband.—
"Your judgment, Madam," ſaid
ſhe haughtily, as the Count ap-
proached, "is totally indifferent

" to me; I neither ſeek your ap-
" probation nor dread your cen-
" ſures — I ſtand not in need of
" your advice to learn the duties
" of a wife. — Reſt contented with
" your boaſted influence over the
" Marchioneſs and Counteſs, nor
" preſume to comment upon my
" conduct with ſuch inſulting free-
" dom." She quitted the temple, darting a look of fury upon Madame de Tourville, and of diſdain upon the Count, as ſhe paſſed: ſhe then directed her ſteps to the dreſſing-room of the new Marchioneſs, where they both turned into ridicule the friendly admonitions of the amiable Tourville. That imperious woman had, by flattery and diſſimulation,

lation, gained a perfect aſcendency over Leonora; to vitiate whoſe innocence of manners was her cruel aim, that ſhe might reduce her to a level with herſelf: and ſo devoid was ſhe of each virtuous ſentiment, that ſhe uſed every argument to withdraw her affections from her once loved huſband, maliciouſly urging the deception of his birth as a motive for reſentment.

The brother of the Marquis, now the only Chevalier de Soiſſons, had been ſtruck with the beauty of Leonora; and, diſſolute in his principles, was capable of attempting the heart of her who was united, by the moſt ſolemn vows, to his adopted brother. — Too well he

ſucceeded

ſucceeded in the baſe deſign! Leonora, ſtung with the cold indifference of her lord, ſought in the attentions of the Chevalier to forget her wrongs; and found, too late, that Henry de Soiſſons was better formed to charm her affections than the wedded Auguſtus.—The new Marchioneſs was the confidante of the Chevalier; and, envying the fortune bequeathed to Auguſtus, exerciſed her revenge, by the moſt ungenerous attempt to wound his peace and honour in the ſeduction of his wife's affections.—She was hourly painting to Leonora the paſſion and admiration of Henry—at the ſame time artfully reminding her of the neglects

and

and coldness of a husband.—Leonora was endowed with a share of vanity equal to her beauty—it was wounded by indifference—it was flattered by attention.—Henry de Soissons was handsome and insinuating.—Leonora possessed a heart easily impressed, and naturally inconstant. She was distant from the precepts of a father—the retirement of the Marchioness and Countess deprived her of their once valued example. At first her virtue started at its danger, but she wanted resolution to withstand the allurements of sighs and protestations; and, depending too much on her own power and the innocence of her intentions, she suffered

herself

herſelf to liſten to the ſyren voice of an imprudent love.

When the Count de Senanges found himſelf alone with Madame de Tourville, after having touched, with regret, upon the changed conduct of Leonora, he entered upon the ſubject relative to the myſterious birth of his friend. Madame de Tourville preſenting to him the manuſcript—"It was for this purpoſe," ſaid ſhe, "that I retired "hither when I was interrupted by "the fair wife of its hero, and was "induced, from the ſtrong impulſe of friendſhip, to offer admonitions unwelcome to the ear "of youth and beauty.—Since you "have obtained permiſſion to ſhare

"with

" with me the contents of this pa-
" per, let me requeſt you to open
" it and read."—The Count, with agitation, broke the ſeal, and began the following relation.—

THE MANUSCRIPT.

Returning home one evening from a viſit in the vicinity of Verſailles, my carriage ſuddenly ſtopped.—Inquiring into the cauſe, I obſerved one of my attendants holding up an oſier baſket, which he inſpected with ſome ſurpriſe.—I began to interrogate the ſervants; when the plaints of an infant inſtantly informed me what were its contents.—Du Bois drew near, and offered to my view a beauteous boy!—

boy!—It was dreſt with elegance, and its waiſt encircled by a ribband, from which hung a golden coral, ornamented with jewels, and diſtinguiſhed by the initials of two letters in a cypher.—The bewailings of this little creature—its looks of helpleſs innocence—affected me with compaſſion and tenderneſs.—I took it in my arms, determined to be its protector till I could reſtore it to thoſe of a parent, who ſeemed to have expoſed it to receive, from the benevolence of ſtrangers, that ſhelter which it was unhappily denied under a paternal roof. I conſidered for a few moments what meaſure to take for the preſerv-

ation

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

nocent to reſt, when ſhe had ſatiſfied with food its clamorous hunger, and I left it in her arms, having firſt taken from its wriſt the coral, by which I hoped one day to trace its birth. The ſucceeding day I paid a viſit to the Comte de Polan; and, upon my return to Paris, was ſhocked to receive information that my infant ſon was dangerouſly ill; and that the Marchioneſs, upon the firſt ſymptoms of indiſpoſition, had ſent him into the country, not doubting but that ſalutary air would infallibly reſtore him. I delayed not a moment to viſit my poor child; and had the misfortune to find, upon my entering the cottage, by the excla-

mations and tears of the nurſe, that it was no more! — I felt the ſtroke with all a father's tenderneſs; but, endeavouring to aſſume the reſolution of a Chriſtian, I ſubmitted with humble reſignation to the irrevocable decree of heaven. The young Auguſtus was repoſing in a cradle; it ſmiled upon me with angelic innocence, and inſpired me with the moſt intereſting pity. A thought darted into my mind to adopt this little foundling; and, notwithſtanding my natural abhorrence to every ſpecies of deception, yet, in the preſent caſe, it appeared not only guiltleſs but laudable. I conſidered that, by acknowledging him for my own ſon, he would

eſcape

eſcape the indignities and mortifications to which a ſtate of dependance is too often expoſed from an unfeeling world: quieting therefore every ſcruple by the juſtification of a ſelf-approving conſcience, I imparted to the nurſe my plan:—I gave her a ſtrict command never to divulge the death of my ſon upon any account whatever, but to aſſiſt me in concealing it from the Marchioneſs, who, I urged, might naturally be induced, in the firſt emotions of her grief, to accuſe her of negligence, and might even carry the warmth of her reſentment ſo far as to ceaſe being her friend.

The poor woman embraced the propoſal with tranſports of gratitude; and, as my ſanction abſolved her from the commiſſion of a crime in this deceit, ſhe ſolemnly promiſed that no authority but mine ſhould ever extort the ſecret. Fortunately none of the good woman's family were at home when the dear infant expired; and ſhe found no difficulty in impoſing upon them a deception they would never ſuſpect. She dreſſed the fictitious Auguſtus de Soiſſons in the veſtments of my departed child, and declared the foundling to be ſuddenly carried off by a convulſion.

It was ſeveral weeks before my wife expreſſed the ſmalleſt inclination

ation to ſee her infant, ſatisfied with hearing of its recovery and health: ſhe found no time, from a continual ſucceſſion of amuſements, to beſtow upon maternal claims. She never had the moſt diſtant ſuſpicion of the deceit; and, the old woman dying about a twelvemonth afterwards, the ſecret remained locked in my own boſom.

The young Auguſtus diſcovered, as his years increaſed, a diſpoſition which promiſed to repay my utmoſt tenderneſs. A ſtrong genius for ſcience and the polite arts were eaſily diſcoverable; I ſaw, with delight, thoſe noble qualities of ſoul which beſpoke the maturer virtues of his future character. With ſighs

profound I made the ſad compariſon between his ſuppoſed brothers and himſelf; and dreaded nothing more than the misfortune of beholding this amiable and accompliſhed youth ſnatched from my arms by the real claims of parentage. Never could I perſuade myſelf to acknowledge, even to him, that I ſtood in no relationſhip to him but that of a friend. Conſidering him as the boaſt and ornament of my family, I could not ſupport the idea of voluntarily relinquiſhing ſuch a treaſure.

Thus have I deferred to the awful hour of death an avowal ſo painful, ſo important!—and could I, without injuſtice, ſtill conceal the

ſecret,

ſecret, I would quit the world the ſuppoſed and envied father of ſuch a ſon; but as I might, by an action ſo intereſted, deprive an illuſtrious family of its greateſt honour, and himſelf, perhaps, of a more exalted fortune, I yield, though reluctantly, thoſe pretenſions to his alliance, to which I have, alas! no natural right.

And now, my beloved Auguſtus, ſince this paper will not be peruſed by thee till thou haſt loſt for ever that imagined father who has watched over thy infancy, and reared thy blooming youth—need I expreſs a hope that thou wilt bear a tender remembrance of his affection?—thy natural parents, if they

yet exiſt, cannot have a fonder intereſt in thy welfare; thy dutiful attentions to me have been exemplary: — mayeſt thou in thy deſcendants experience that comfort I have found in thee. Perſevere in the path of virtue and of honour — and may thy happineſs be equal to thy merits!

In one of my cabinets is a caſket carefully ſealed up, which will be delivered after my deceaſe. It contains the coral, which may one day aſſiſt and confirm the diſcovery of thy birth. Farewell for ever!

HENRY AUGUSTUS,
Marquis de Soiſſons.

When

When the Count had concluded the narrative, he found himſelf ſtill as ignorant as ever in regard to the real birth of his friend. Madame de Tourville, who had appeared uncommonly agitated during the recital, demanded of the Count, with viſible emotion, whether the coral had been produced? — He informed her that Auguſtus was in poſſeſſion of it, having received it from his hands that morning. —— "Fly then, my dear "Count," ſaid ſhe, ſtarting up; "a ſtrange preſentiment has ſeized "my heart! Oh! if that coral bears "the cypher of A. T. and is or-"namented with a wreath of eme-"ralds and brilliants, his unfortu-

"nate

" nate father was not unknown to " me." — Monſieur de Senanges caſting upon her an inquiſitive look of aſtoniſhment—" Interrogate me " not," ſhe cried; " ſuſpenſe muſt " ſtill keep me ſilent; a thouſand " tender and affecting ideas crowd " into my imagination; alternate " hopes and fears diſtract me:— " haſten to your friend, procure " the ſacred relic of his birth:—if " it confirms the ſtrong prepoſ- " ſeſſion of my mind, Auguſtus, " though the injured pledge of an " unhappy union, ſprings from the " nobleſt blood of France." Urged by the curioſity of impatient friend- ſhip, Monſieur de Senanges flew towards the caſtle; and fortunately meeting

meeting the object of his ſearch, "Come, my friend," he cried, "accompany me to the pavilion— "produce the caſket—upon this "hour depends a diſcovery of the "utmoſt importance!"—The expreſſion of the Count's features, and his evident emotion, convinced the Chevalier that Senanges was become the maſter of his ſecret.— "Am I," interrupted he with an air of dignity, "deſcended from "a race equal to my ſoaring, my "ambitious mind?—or, from an "ignoble birth, do you pronounce "me unworthy of my education, "and beneath your friendſhip?— "Speak—complete my wretched- "neſs, and let me fly from a world

"which

"which ſports with my misfor-
"tunes!"—"Baniſh ſuch ill found-
"ed doubts," returned the Count—
"follow my ſteps, and learn not
"to diſtruſt that Providence which
"is the ſureſt guardian of unble-
"miſhed virtue."—With a coun-
tenance of unconvinced ſuſpicion
the impetuous Auguſtus followed
the ſteps of his anxious guide, into
whoſe hands he had reluctantly
yielded the caſket.

Madame de Tourville met the
Count at the entrance of the tem-
ple; trembling impatience agitated
every nerve—ſhe graſped the box—
broke open the ſeals — unclaſped
the caſe — diſcovered the coral —
and

and fainted in the Count's extended arms.

Auguſtus arrived at this inſtant! Every ſelfiſh conſideration vaniſhed from his mind, and his whole attention was engaged in aſſiſting her recovery.—She unclofed her eyes, and feebly exclaimed—"My ſon! "My ſon!"—The Chevalier ſupported her on one knee—ſhe perceived him—and, folding him to her boſom, thus continued—"Oh, gracious heaven! give me "ſtrength to bear this ecſtaſy of "joy!—I have ſuſtained adverſity! "I have ſurvived misfortune!—"but never have till now experi-"enced the dangerous trial of op-"preſſive happineſs!"—She gazed for

for a moment with ſpeechleſs fondneſs on the transfixed Auguſtus; and, ſtraining him again to her heart, continued thus — "It was the force of ſympathy! — "the voice of nature! — that "inſpired thoſe ſentiments which "intereſted me in the fate of my "Auguſtus! Often, indeed, has "memory fondly traced, in that "majeſtic mien, thoſe graceful fea- "tures, the dear reſemblance of a "much-loved huſband! and what "imagination ſeemed alone to "paint, by muſing fancy's recollec- "tive power, my raptured eyes now "realize before me! — My long- "loſt child! — thou art the in- "jured — the lamented ſon of the "Viſcount de St. Aubin! — and I "am

"I am his unfortunate and aban-
"doned widow!"—In the coun-
tenance of the Chevalier was im-
printed, at this diſcovery, the various
emotions of his feeling heart—he
was immoveable!—he ſpoke not!—
wonder!—rapture!—tenderneſs!—
expreſſed itſelf in his more than
eloquent ſilence!——

When Madame de Tourville was a little recovered from her trance of joy, ſhe reſted herſelf upon a ſofa; tears flowed to her relief, and ſhe indulged thoſe tranſ-ports of parental feelings which, till that hour, ſhe had never expe-rienced through her life of ſorrow.

Monſieur de Senanges, though a ſilent, was yet a delighted, witneſs

of

of an event ſo unexpected: with looks of cordial friendſhip he congratulated them on a diſcloſure ſo important, ſo intereſting!—When the power of language returned to Auguſtus, a tender ſcene of mutual happineſs enſued;—he ſeemed to have forgot even the woes of love in the exquiſite ſenſibility of filial endearments; but when he impatiently requeſted his newly acquired mother to enter upon the detail of circumſtances ſo important to them both—"Alas!" with a deep ſigh, ſhe replied, "you muſt ſpare me "a recital, which would, at the "ſame time, be a renewal of my "misfortunes!—they are already "traced by the pen of anguiſh,

"when

" when the heart yet bled with
" recent woes! My tale of miſery
" is addreſſed to that incomparable
" friend, the Ducheſs de Gramont,
" a few days preceding her mar-
" riage: in her laſt illneſs ſhe
" reſigned it to me, from the
" generous principle of not riſk-
" ing, after her death, the diſclo-
" ſure of events intended only for
" the boſom of friendſhip.—I will
" immediately put you in poſſeſſion
" of this confidential letter, which
" paints the accumulated ſorrows
" of an unhappy daughter, wife,
" and mother!—How often have
" I bathed it with my tears!—little
" imagining I could ever be ſo
" bleſt as to preſent it to a ſon,

" whoſe death I had mourned ere
" I had even hailed his birth.
" When you ſhall have received it
" from my hands, I will leave you
" and the Count at liberty to pe-
" ruſe together a narrative which
" will tenderly affect your ſenſibi-
" lity.—Ah, my Auguſtus!—be
" kind to the frailties of a father,
" miſled by example, not naturally
" the child of vice—and pity the
" errors of a mother, whoſe unſuſ-
" picious innocence betrayed her
" heart, and rendered her the dupe
" of treacherous friendſhip! While
" you are acquainting yourſelf with
" the mournful records of your fa-
" mily, I will retire into my cloſet,
" to offer up my grateful adoration

" to

" to that Power who has conduct-
" ed me through the thorny paths
" of life to crown my declining
" years with unexpected bleſſings!
" I ſhall leave it to you, Auguſtus,
" to impart to your Leonora a diſ-
" covery ſo intereſting to her. The
" Marchioneſs and Counteſs have
" the tendereſt claim to learn from
" me the earlieſt avowal of an
" event which a long friendſhip
" for their grateful Tourville will
" render the ſource of exquiſite
" happineſs to them!" — With
theſe words ſhe quitted the temple
to haſten in queſt of the promiſed
narrative; when, almoſt inſtantly

returning, she delivered it to her expecting son; and, bidding him adieu for the present, she directed her steps once more towards the castle, where she soon imparted to the charming sisters the wondrous event of that important day.

ADELAIDE DE TOURVILLE
TO
HENRIETTA DE VALIERE.

ABBEY-AUX-BOIS.

AND do you ſtill intereſt yourſelf, my amiable Henrietta, in the fate of an unfortunate, miſguided friend? can that blameleſs daughter, who is on the point of preſenting her hand, authorized by duty, beſtow one tender thought upon the guilty Adelaide?—Yes, the innocent, the perfect Henrietta, from her own conſcious virtues, can forgive the frailties of another!—You conjure me, by that tender friendſhip which once flattered all my wiſhes, to at-

tend your auſpicious nuptials—Ah, no!—my fatal preſence would dim with tears your hymeneal torch!—ſhould I dare to approach the altar of propitious love, parental approbation would ſhun the advance of filial diſobedience, and think its holy rites profaned by ſuch a witneſs! —ſcarcely have twenty-four revolving moons paſſed by ſince this widowed hand was plighted to a huſband — for whom I forfeited a daughter's name! — but ſoon the curſes of an irritated father overtook his guilty child!—that tie, unſanctified by him, fate ſoon diſſolved! —the object of my firſt and laſt affections, by remorſeleſs death, was ſnatched for ever from me!—yet I ſubmit, oh heaven, to thy decree!

nor,

nor, ſunk beneath the weight of merited afflictions, preſume to murmur at my lot.——

I am no longer diſtinguiſhed by the name of St. Aubin—an incenſed parent would, in his dying moments, have retracted the bleſſing I obtained, had I not reſumed that of Tourville.—You requeſt the ſtory of my woes from the generous wiſh, by ſharing to alleviate them. —Alas! nor time, nor penitence, can obliterate them from my memory!—but I obey you, and commence my ſad detail, regretting that the tear of friendſhip will bedew your bridal eye!——

You left me at the convent, when the Baroneſs de Valiere had ſum-

moned you home to make her a visit of some weeks; and before your return I had quitted it, as I then thought, for ever. — Your gentle heart still bears in remembrance our tender parting. — For some days I yielded to my sorrows, and refused all offered consolation. — At length the arrival of Mademoiselle St. Aubin roused me from my lethargy — her affliction, the day she entered our solemn abode, attracted my compassion, and engaged my attention. She had lately lost a mother; and was placed by the Viscount her father under the care of the Abbess, during the first days of her mourning. I forgot my own grief in soothing hers, and we

soon

ſoon commenced a mutual friend-ſhip. The natural gaiety of her diſpoſition by degrees returned, and I reſumed my tranquillity, — but though her humour was obliging, and her converſation ſprightly and entertaining, I began to diſcover that ſhe poſſeſſed not a ſympathy of heart like yours.—She wanted that gentle ſenſibility, that winning ſoftneſs, which ſo tenderly attached my ſoul to Henrietta!—Your frequent letters were a conſtant amuſement; and, vain of your affection, I generally made Amelia a ſharer in our correſpondence; but from the childiſh idea, that you might conſider her as a rival in my affections, I forbore to mention her in my anſwers.

ſwers. —When you complained of the irkſome engagements of public life, and expreſſed your ardent wiſhes to enjoy again the ſweet retirement you had left within our hallowed walls, Amelia never failed to inveigh againſt your ſentimental gravity, and to proteſt how much ſhe languiſhed to change places with you: ſhe deſcribed the gay abode of Paris as a terreſtrial paradiſe; and ſo far influenced my judgment as to make me anxiouſly long to partake of its enchanting pleaſures. —Such is the force of ill example! with Henrietta I was tranquil, virtuous, and happy!—my heart imbibed from hers the ſolidity of reaſon, the confidence of innocence,

cence, and the ſatisfaction of a ſelf-approving conſcience. With Amelia I became reſtleſs, melancholy, and unquiet: ſolitude began to loſe its charms, and, ſighing for the joys of a world yet unknown, I privately reproached my tardy parents for delaying my introduction into it. — Fatal miſtake! —dear-bought experience!—

One day Amelia received a letter, which ſeemed to tranſport her. "Thank heaven," ſaid ſhe, "my "brother comes to viſit me to-"morrow; you ſhall ſee him Ade-"laide; and, if you can behold "him with indifference, you have "an icy heart." When I aroſe the next morning, I had not for-

gotten

gotten theſe words; and, feeling a ſtronger inclination to conquer than be conquered, I ſtudiouſly endeavoured to ſet off my little perſon to the beſt advantage. I looked in my glaſs — the glow of vanity animated my complexion; and I deſcended into the parlour with a ſecret triumph, where I found my new friend converſing with her brother at the grate. — She preſented him to me; and in a moment I was loſt to every idea but that of inſpiring Monſieur de St. Aubin with the ſame ſentiments I felt for him. His perſon was uncommonly handſome; and the graces of his addreſs were irreſiſtible — he caſt upon me ſuch a penetrating look, that I

fooliſhly believed he read what paſſed in my heart. A conſcious bluſh ſuffuſed my cheek; and, to conceal it, I turned away my eyes, not conſidering that my aukward confuſion was moſt likely to betray me. While I was in this diſtreſſing ſituation, I heard him whiſper to his ſiſter, "My God, Amelia! "what an angel!" — "Truly," replied ſhe, laughing, "you both "ſeem planet-ſtruck, and I am "likely to have a charming time "of it!"

"Come, for heaven's ſake, bro- "ther, reaſſume your reaſon, and "inform me how the dear world of "Paris goes on."—She proceeded to aſk ten thouſand queſtions in a breath,

breath, and concluded with charging him to tell her father, that, if he did not recall her from the convent, she should actually fall a victim to despair. — "Ah, sister!" returned he, with an expressive look at me, "if you expected to retain "me an advocate in such a cause, "you should not have exposed me "to the temptation of betraying "your confidence! — how can I "plead against myself, and assist in "removing you from a spot where "my whole soul is riveted! — Allow "me at least to continue a few "days in your neighbourhood, to re-"new these heavenly visits." He staid till the bell rung for dinner, and left

left me too well convinced that I had not an icy heart! — In the evening Amelia entered my chamber with an archneſs in her looks which proved that ſhe had read my ſentiments.—"Will you believe it, "child?" ſaid ſhe, "I have al- "ready received a letter from my "vanquiſhed brother—you are the "ſubject of every line; take it, there- "fore, Mademoiſelle, and peruſe it "at your leiſure."—I was covered with confuſion;—but, however flattering this intelligence was to my vanity, I had the prudence and reſolution to reſiſt the tempting offer.—Oh, that I had ſtill maintained ſo laudable a conduct!—but, alas! — love triumphed over the

feeble

feeble dictates of reaſon and obedience; and the promiſe of my hand ſoon followed the ſacrifice of my heart.—The ſeducing ſounds of ardent paſſion were ever in my ear—Amelia echoed all her brother's vows — my Henrietta was abſent, and I liſtened! — My youth!— my inexperience — muſt abſolve my fault — and oh! my ſufferings have dearly paid the forfeit of my duty. It was not till the victory of my affections was completed that Amelia alarmed my doubts of obtaining the mutual conſent of our parents to our union, by informing me that, in the early part of life, the Viſcount de St. Aubin and my father became inveterate

terate foes, from ſome miſunderſtanding in an affair of importance, in which they were both concerned: that they had an encounter, wherein each was ſlightly wounded, but which was by no means ſucceſsful in effecting a reconciliation. I was thunderſtruck at this intelligence, and did not attempt to conceal from Amelia that my every hope of happineſs was centred in her brother. She failed not to betray to him the weakneſs I acknowledged; — ſhe contrived an interview before reflection could aſſert its powers, and artfully introduced my conqueror, to ſubdue the ſcruples of conflicting duty. The inſinuating St. Aubin had no

ſooner prevailed upon me, by ſighs and tears, aſſiſted by the ardent rhetoric of love, to promiſe I would be only his, than he exerted all his fatal influence to perſuade me to fly with him immediately to the altar. In vain I reminded him that a clandeſtine marriage would only exaſperate againſt me a father on whoſe approbation I depended for an ample dowry, and who might never forgive my daring to unite my hand unlicenſed by his authority — that, unleſs the unfortunate breach between our parents could be healed by a propoſed alliance, and that the Viſcount de St. Aubin approved and ratified the treaty by an equal fortune, I knew too well

well the conſequence. He artfully replied to theſe remonſtrances, that, as I was myſelf the only object of his wiſhes, a ſordid impulſe ſhould never induce him to run the riſk of loſing me for ever; and that, if I loved like him, I ſhould not ſcruple to ſacrifice to ſo generous a paſſion the empty vanity of wealth. Theſe diſintereſted proofs of the tendereſt attachment vanquiſhed each filial reſolution; and, as he was dearer to me than life itſelf, I yielded at length to his perſuaſive arguments, and engaged my honour to meet him at the altar the firſt moment that a proper opportunity offered. — My lover was in ecſtaſy; and, though his impatience urged me to

elope with him from the convent; yet he conſented to defer his happineſs till my arrival at Paris, where I had received the unexpected commands of my parents to attend them. I confeſs I rejoiced then at a circumſtance which, in any other ſituation, would have been a ſource of the greateſt regret—I mean that of your removal from Paris, the day before I reached it. Accuſtomed to depoſit in the boſom of Henrietta every anxiety, and every pleaſure, the conſcious error of my conduct made me forebode the detection of her penetrating eyes. I dreaded her cenſure—her reproaches:—yet ſo infatuated was I by an extravagant paſſion, that

that I would have ſacrificed to it my deareſt friendſhip. Mademoiſelle de St. Aubin received, about the ſame time, the permiſſion of the Viſcount to quit a retirement ſo repugnant to her inclinations. She obeyed with tranſport the delightful ſummons; but we could propoſe no other intercourſe than that of letters: interviews, except in public, were impoſſible, from the unfortunate animoſity ſubſiſting between our families. We often however exchanged epiſtolary converſe, without the leaſt danger of diſcovery from the vigilance of thoſe who had no reaſon to ſuſpect our intimacy: and, having the prudence never to employ the con-

fidence of ſervants in a tranſaction of ſuch danger and importance, we artfully gave and received our letters, when we met in public, without obſervation. By theſe means St. Aubin and myſelf continued the tender intercourſe of mutual vows. Upon my return home I had reaſon to conceive that my ſudden removal from the convent was occaſioned by my father's objection to my forming any friendſhip with Mademoiſelle de St. Aubin: though he never hinted the idea, except by aſking me, in a careleſs manner, how I liked that young lady. Love had taught me diſſimulation; and reading in his eyes an immediate prohibition which might, from the

intelligence of mine, endanger a diſcovery, I inſtantly became guilty of the firſt falſehood I had ever uttered, by ſaying that I could form little opinion of her character, being only perſonally acquainted with her, as her great affliction for her recent loſs made her avoid ſociety at the Abbey-aux-Bois. He appeared pleaſed with this information, and immediately began a lecture upon filial duty and obedience; from which I collected the fatal aſſurance that I muſt expect no influence from any choice of my own in marriage—that himſelf and my mother were the proper judges in a cauſe of ſuch conſequence as my ſettlement in life;

and that they had provided for me a huſband, both worthy and amiable, whom they ſhould have the ſatisfaction of preſenting to me upon his return from his travels. The ſtern determination of my father flattered me with no hopes of melting him by entreaties; — my heart felt all the horror of my ſituation, but ſilence gave the imaginary conſent, accompanied by a reſpectful obeiſance from my trembling knees; he obſerved my confuſion, and, attributing it to timidity, permitted me to retire; while, puting into my hand a miniature ſet round with brilliants — "There, "Adelaide," ſaid he, "view in "that portrait the reſemblance of

"the lover diſtinguiſhed by my "choice, and whom you have not "only my conſent but my com- "mands to receive as your future "huſband.—You are too young, "and too delicate, to have ſuffered "yet any impreſſion on your heart; "let it here fix upon him to whom "I have already promiſed your "hand." Scarcely had I power to reach my apartment, where I locked myſelf in to ſhed a torrent of tears. I ſaw no remedy but almoſt an immediate marriage with the man I loved.—My father's cruel diſregard to my inclination hardened my mind, and confirmed me more ſtrongly in my diſobedience.—Without even deigning to

caſt

caſt my eyes upon the picture, I daſhed it with ſcorn into a box of ſhells, which ſtood open in the corner of the room. Having conſidered ſome time the meaſures neceſſary to take, I judged it prudent not to alarm St. Aubin with the idea of a rival, leſt he might be induced to take meaſures which might endanger a diſcovery.—I waited therefore for the reception of his next epiſtle, to fix in my reply our private nuptials.

The more I reflected upon my ſituation, the more I became reconciled to an act of diſobedience, which I thought was juſtified by love.—I felt indeed a ſtrong reluctance to wound the boſom of a tender

tender mother, who merited all my duty and affection; but I could not hope to find in her a refuge from my father's fury, if I even dared to attempt diſcloſing to her ear the immoveable attachment of my heart to the deſcendant of an enemy.—Her boſom was the abode of every gentle virtue, but I knew too well it was impenetrable to weakneſs—and therefore I could not encourage the moſt diſtant hope that ſhe would be indulgent to a refractory child, who had preſumed to fix her wiſhes on an object whoſe family had incurred the hatred of mine.—I received this very evening a letter full of ſuch tender complaints for my retard-

ing

ing our union, and of ſuch irreſiſtible entreaties to complete the felicity of St. Aubin — that love prevailed — and, in a fatal hour, I forfeited the bleſſing of a father to receive the hand of an inconſtand huſband! ——

Mademoiſelle de St. Aubin, who had been the ſtrong promoter of our marriage, was alſo the witneſs of it. —When the irrevocable knot was tied, my reſolution, inſtead of increaſing, entirely forſook me! — and, though I had before determined to throw myſelf at the feet of my parents, and to implore their pardon, I now found myſelf utterly incapable of confronting their merited reſentment. —— After many

vain

vain attempts to write, I at length addreſſed my mother, ſupplicating her mediation with my father, and their joint permiſſion to throw myſelf at their feet with a huſband, whoſe illuſtrious family I flattered myſelf would not be conſidered as unworthy their alliance. — I waited with trembling impatience for my doom, nor could the affectionate endearments of St. Aubin reaſſure my fears. — How inconſiſtent is the human mind! — no reflections had force to reſtrain me from an action, which now appeared in all its horrors! — Too late the voice of duty whiſpered to my conſcience, and reproached me with my ingratitude and diſobedience!

dience!—I had dared to commit a deed I could neither revoke nor juſtify.—After having been tortured by an hour's ſuſpenſe, a packet was preſented me by the returning meſſenger—with a fatal preſentiment I opened it!—it contained my own letter, with only the following diſtracting lines written in the cover, in my mother's hand!——

"Wretched, imprudent girl!—
"in making choice of St. Aubin
"for a huſband thou haſt loſt
"every pretenſion to a father's
"bleſſing!—that father renounces
"thee for ever!—thy duplicity of
"conduct aggravates thy crime,
"by adding deceit to diſobedi-
"ence.

" ence.—Allied to the family he
" moſt deteſts—never will he again
" behold thee.—Fly then far hence,
" and repent at a diſtance thy unfor-
" tunate union!"

I was inſenſible for near an hour! When I recovered, finding myſelf alone with Amelia, wildly I inquired for her brother—ſhe ſoothed my affliction, entreated me to be comforted, and aſſured me I had every thing to hope from the Viſcount's honour and humanity, to whom his ſon had that moment flown to implore protection for his Adelaide.—But, alas! his heart was equally obdurate!—the family reſentment, which had ſo long ſubſiſted between him and Monſieur de Tourville,

now

now roſe from its embers with redoubled fury:—and ſo vehemently was he exaſperated againſt his ſon for giving his hand to the daughter of his foe profeſſed, that he baniſhed him eternally from his preſence!—In the bitterneſs of anguiſh I reproached St. Aubin for having trepanned me into an union with him: he could be no ſtranger to the implacable ſpirit of his father;—and my eyes were now opened to his motives for a private marriage, which muſt have been actuated by the certainty of a refuſal on his ſide, that might, by publiſhing our mutual attachment, from the interpoſition of my parents,

parents, have cauſed an everlaſting ſeparation.

He tenderly implored my pardon, and conjured me to attribute his conduct to exceſs of paſſion.—He added, that, ſince he had, for my ſake, equally incurred parental diſpleaſure, we ought, by mutually conſoling each other, to compenſate for every pecu-
" niary diſappointment.—" Leave
" to vulgar minds," continued he,
" the ſordid pleaſures of unyield-
" ing pelf—be love our treaſure!
" —the rural cottage and the hum-
" ble vale ſhall impart to our united
" ſouls more genuine happineſs than
" the falſe ſplendour of exalted
" life!—let me be all to Adelaide,

"ſince Adelaide is all to me!"—I was melted by his perſuaſive arguments; love pleaded in my boſom, and ſtilled the tumults of upbraiding duty.

Upon reconſidering the lines traced by my mother's hand, I cheriſhed hopes that they were only the haſty ſentiments of an incenſed father, who might, by her gentle offices, at length be induced to ſoften in my favour.—She had not touched upon her own reſentment—a circumſtance of cordial comfort to my heart—it formed the moſt ſanguine expectations; and I flattered myſelf that time might efface the remembrance of my fault.—With this view I made ſeveral at-

tempts to ſubdue the boſom of maternal anger; but, alas! every plea was ineffectual; and I found that all my remaining happineſs muſt centre in the affections of a huſband!

To retain them I found more difficult than the ſtrength of my own, and my confidence in his, attachment could have believed.—The Viſcount, through the promiſed interceſſion of Mademoiſelle de St. Aubin, who acknowledged herſelf his favourite child, and continued to profeſs for me the warmeſt friendſhip, was prevailed upon to reſign to his ſon a ſmall eſtate a very few leagues from Paris; whither we retired—and where I could

have tasted, with my beloved St. Aubin, every joy that competency can give to an unaspiring mind;—but, born to high expectations, and endued with a taste for every expensive pleasure, he sighed for dear variety, and found the insipid attentions of a wife he once adored did not compensate for those lost delights he had resigned for her!—I saw the labouring conflicts of his soul; and, sensible that reproaches were not likely to strengthen his wavering attachment, I urged him to change the scene; and, by mixing with his former associates at Paris, to dissipate, in some measure, the remorse of having incurred the resentment of a father.—With avi-

dity

dity he embraced a propoſal ſo agreeable to his inclinations. He even, in the gaiety of his heart, expreſſed a wiſh that I would accompany him; but my ſpirits were too much depreſſed for me to think of quitting a retirement which allowed me the indulgence of my ſorrows.

For ſome months St. Aubin divided his time between Paris and our ſweet retreat; and I had no reaſon to complain of his want of tenderneſs.—I ever welcomed him with ſmiles; and he either felt or counterfeited raptures when he returned. But, by degrees, his viſits at home were leſs frequent: he became ſilent and reſerved; and, if I gently reproached his coldneſs, or dropped

an involuntary tear, he chid me with moroſeneſs. I had no participating friend to ſhare my griefs; and, by partaking to relieve them, my own family, and that of St. Aubin, united to diſclaim me; even my ſweet Henrietta, ſubmiſſive to parental laws, renounced in the rebellious child the guilty friend!

Thus was I excluded from the world, and left a prey to an unavailing penitence, which nothing but the indifference of the man for whom I had reſigned ſo much could have awakened in me!—Amelia, it is true, ſometimes viſited me in my ſolitude; but her attentions began likewiſe to be on the wane; and I, by ſad experience, found the inſta-

bility

bility of friendſhip as well as love. She was wholly occupied by worldly pleaſures — ſplendour and parade dazzled her ſenſes — ambition, vanity, and pride, obſtructed in her heart even the natural ſoftneſs and compaſſion of her ſex.

When I lamented one day the declining affection of her brother, and his continual abſences, inſtead of being moved by my tears, or ſoothing my diſtreſs, ſhe laughed at my folly, and ironically told me, that I muſt poſſeſs a large portion of vanity, indeed, to expect conſtancy in man, or truth in plighted faith! — that, inſtead of weeping the inattentions of a huſband, I ought to requite them;

and, by exhibiting my boaſted beauty to the world, to attract ſurrounding lovers.

Shocked with the avowal of ſuch ſentiments, I rebuked her with a warmth which drew upon me the moſt cruel reproaches! — She upbraided me with my ingratitude; — and, dropping the veil of unſubſtantial friendſhip, her dark ſoul ſtood all confeſſed before me! — She told me haughtily that I owed to her my preſent maintenance — that, when my own family arrogantly diſclaimed alliance with her illuſtrious houſe, and reprobated me for ever, as though I had contaminated the blood I had ſo greatly ennobled, her generous interpoſition

ſition had prevailed upon her father (notwithſtanding my wily arts had ſeduced an only ſon to diſobedience) to ſhelter me from poverty and want! — I diſdained a reply to ſuch inſulting language; and, though I felt all the indignation that wounded pride, yet conſcious ſuperiority, could inſpire, I aſſumed an air of provoking unconcern: and coldly ſaying—I left her to the reflections of her heart, which might ſuggeſt to her a ſupply of new invectives — retired to my chamber, where, in an agony of tears, I bewailed my ſituation, and ruminated upon the misfortunes I had brought upon myſelf. — I ſoon heard her carriage drive

from

from the door; and, I confeſs, felt aſtoniſhed that, after the repeated and unnumbered profeſſions of her inviolable friendſhip, ſhe could have reſolution or indifference enough to leave me upon ſuch terms.—But I ſhortly found that ſhe wiſhed an opportunity to give up my acquaintance, and had created a voluntary diſpute, to throw upon me the odium of her deſertion.

Though I had diſcovered ſince our alliance many failings in her character, and errors in her conduct, which I attributed to the neglects of a very ſuperficial education, yet little did I think her capable of ſuch abject ſentiments: I had a confidence in her affection,

and

and had in reality for her the regard ſhe only perſonated for me; — my relenting heart prepared to receive her conceſſions, felt, conſequently, ſtrongly mortified by her ſudden departure, which was an indication how unimportant I was become to her! — The next day St. Aubin unexpectedly arrived.—Cruel as were his neglects, my heart bounded at his approach. — Had he beſtowed on me one ſmile, I could have forgotten every former unkindneſs — but, alas! — frowns lowered upon his brow! — and the impending tempeſt lightened in his eye!—Notwithſtanding all my conſcious innocence, I trembled. — He obſerved this falſe evi-

dence

dence of guilt, and at length broke the awful ſilence.—"You have "done well, Adelaide," ſaid he in a ſtern accent, "to deprive "yourſelf of the only friend for- "tune had left you:—your ingra- "titude of temper has extended "itſelf to the ſiſter of your huſ- "band;—but be aſſured the in- "vectives you have dared to "beſtow on Mademoiſelle de St. "Aubin ſhall be properly reſent- "ed by a brother, who will ſuffer "no indignities from a dependent "wife.—In forfeiting Amelia's "friendſhip you have loſt all pre- "tenſions to my love."—"Say "rather," replied I, in a tone raiſed by my indignation, "that "the

" the extinction of that feeble love
" preceded even the forfeit of that
" boaſted friendſhip; and, conſe-
" quently, has expoſed me to the
" contempt and ridicule of your
" ſiſter. I hope, however, wretched
" as I am, I ſhall always have ſpi-
" rit left to reſent an inſult offered
" to my honour, and virtue to
" protect it. Her friendſhip I
" ſolemnly abjure, with all the
" ſcorn it merits; — the woman
" who can propoſe retaliation for
" a huſband's infidelity muſt be
" unworthy the ſacred name of
" friend, and loſt to every ſenti-
" ment of delicacy!" — " When a
" wife deſcends to make complaints
" of a huſband, ſhe muſt expect,"

interrupted

interrupted he, "the cenſure of "the world.—Amelia treated you, "in all probability, with the levity "your conduct merits.—The wo- "man who is guilty of one breach "of duty may be ſuppoſed capa- "ble of more; and ſhe who could "act in defiance of parental claims "will ſcarcely be very ſcrupulous "in regard to conjugal ones—wit- "neſs myſelf," aſſuming an air of aggravating indifference and ironi- cal eaſe—"my paſſion for Adelaide "de Tourville ſubdued even the "reſpect I owed my father;—and "when that ſubſides another object "(what mortal can reſiſt almighty "love!) may have power to make "me forget the marriage vow."—

"Ah,

"Ah, barbarous St. Aubin!" cried I, burſting into tears, "can the "man for whom I reſigned each "filial ſentiment reproach the ac- "tion he himſelf inſpired?—No, "—ungrateful, cruel huſband!—it "was not from levity of conduct "that I dared to break through the "firſt ties of duty!—A pure, a "ſtrong, unalterable love, attached "me to an object I once thought "worthy of it!—it ſeduced my in- "experienced youth and artleſs "affections from the path of pru- "dence and diſcretion.—I ſacrificed "my heart!—You ſaw your con- "queſt, and obtained my hand!— "At the holy altar I reſigned my "ſelf your legal victim!—how

"have

" have you repaid my love, my
" confidence?—Fatal weakneſs!—
" I have incurred the curſe of diſ-
" obedience!—and thus, juſtly re-
" nounced by an offended father,
" though cruelly abandoned by
" an ungrateful huſband, I have
" hoarded up for my remaining days
" remorſe and wretchedneſs!" — I fixed my flowing eyes upon him; he regarded me with a mixture of pity, tenderneſs, and ſhame!—He took my hand, and gently preſſing it, melted into tears. — Inſtantly my anger vaniſhed — I ſunk upon my knees, and implored his forgiveneſs if I had, in the anguiſh of my ſoul, too warmly upbraided him. —He raiſed me inſtantly; and, folding

me

me in his arms, conjured me to be comforted, and acknowledged he had merited my reproaches, and was himself the sole aggressor.

"Alas!" said he, "to one se-"duced, like me, so early by the "fascinating follies of the world— "how arduous the task to fly its "strong temptations!—Be it thine, "sweet monitress, to point the path "of happiness and virtue—thine to "recall the wanderer home!" He ceased — Ah, happy moment of reviving love!—ye fleeting raptures, never to return! — St. Aubin was this evening every thing my fondest hopes could wish—I led him round our small domain; his smiles illumed the blooming scene of na-

ture; it appeared to my delighted eyes a paradiſe regained! — The trees, the flowers, ſeemed conſcious of my happineſs; the grove with freſher verdure glowed, the ſhrubs with ſweeter fragrance breathed. The ſucceeding morning dawned on our returning felicity: ſoft hope once more reviſited my boſom: yet the riſing fear of timid love would ſtill obtrude itſelf an anxious gueſt. The artifices of Amelia I had too painfully experienced not to dread:— in ruminating on the character of this fickle, this beloved huſband, I found his judgment was eaſily led aſtray by the prevalence of example and the force of precept; he was neither

proof

proof againſt the allurements of vice nor the perſuaſive ſentiments of virtue; each reigned alternate—the impulſe of the moment ruled his heart, and the preſent object had the reſiſtleſs power of influencing his conduct. This was a dangerous weakneſs, and fatally predicted the ſequel of my misfortunes! St. Aubin joined me in my favourite alcove, which nature had adorned with fragrant jeſſamine and verdant myrtle.—I obſerved that he was abſorbed in thought; and, upon my addreſſing to him ſome intereſting expreſſions, he looked upon me with a mixture of tenderneſs and pity. Our tête à tête was ſhortly interrupted by the

arrival of a letter from Amelia I changed countenance at the well-known deceitful hand — my heart preſaged a thouſand fears, which were, alas! but too well founded, and too ſoon accompliſhed. Monſieur de St. Aubin looked diſtreſſed; he told me that he felt the moſt unfeigned reluctance to quit the enchanting ſpot which contained his treaſure; yet he could not refuſe the preſſing invitation of his ſiſter, who urged him to viſit her that morning. He added, that the influence ſhe poſſeſſed over his father made it neceſſary for him to continue on good terms with her: nor did he doubt but that her ſummons proceeded from an ardent

dent deſire to be reconciled to me. He entreated I would, for his ſake, forgive the unguarded impetuoſity of her temper, which, he confeſſed, ſometimes obſcured her virtues; and even propoſed my accompanying him to Paris. My pride could not admit the idea of condeſcending to make the firſt advances to a woman, who had not only groſſly inſulted, but had cruelly attempted to injure me in the affections of my huſband. I aſſured him however that, as I could refuſe him nothing that was eſſential to his happineſs, I would conſent to forgive Amelia, upon condition that ſhe made our reconciliation her requeſt. He was ſatisfied; and, pro-

miſing to return in a few hours, tenderly embraced and quitted me. I gazed after him till diſtance concealed him from my view; and mourned his departure as if I had a preſentiment of my misfortune. Towards evening I began anxiouſly to expect him — upon every ſound of horſes on the adjacent road my bounding heart anticipated his approach—but, alas! every hope vaniſhed, when a note was preſented to me from the dear deceiver — it contained a few haſty lines, written by his trembling hand, entreating me not to be uneaſy at his abſence; that family buſineſs of importance to our happineſs detained him from me a few days;

after

after which, he would fly on the wings of rapture to his beloved Adelaide. I kept this meſſenger while I wrote an anſwer, full of tenderneſs, lamenting our ſeparation, but expreſſing my gratitude for his attention, my confidence in his affection, and my ardent wiſhes for ſucceſs in his renewed application to the Viſcount, which I concluded was the buſineſs in queſtion.

A fortnight elapſed, yet he returned not to Belle-vue.—During that interval I had the conſolation of receiving ſeveral pathetic letters, filled with reiterated vows of everlaſting love, bewailing the neceſſity of his tedious abſence;

but never mentioning either the name of his ſiſter or the progreſs of our cauſe.—At length he ceaſed to write, and all my fears and apprehenſive doubts returned with double force: even languid hope, like an expiring flame, ceaſed now to ſooth my deſolated heart! One day a letter, addreſſed to me in a diſguiſed hand, was brought, which threw me into an agony of grief. Theſe were the contents:

"Mademoiſelle de St. Aubin "deceives you:—ſhe is a falſe "friend:—ſhe has introduced to "your huſband a widow of power-"ful attractions——Madame de "Miran holds him in the ſtrongeſt "chains—on her he laviſhes thoſe

"moments

" moments he abſents himſelf from
" you."

Grief, jealouſy, and indignation, took poſſeſſion of my ſoul: in vain I endeavoured to diſcover to whoſe officious zeal I was indebted for this mortifying intelligence. The abruptneſs of the ſtyle was calculated to wound, and not to ſooth me; and was, therefore, evidently dictated by an enemy rather than a friend. Alas! I was but too conſcious that my imprudence had not left me one object whom I could call by that endearing name. " Ah," cried I, almoſt frantic with reſentment," bereft of every conſo-
" lation — forſaken by the world;
" — is it alone to aggravate my
" wretchedneſs

"wretchedneſs that I am informed "my huſband is unfaithful!" — I flew to my writing-deſk; and, in the inconſiderate warmth of jealous paſſion, wrote and diſpatched to St. Aubin the following lines:

"If the charms of Madame de "Miran have not quite effaced the "remembrance of a once-loved "wife, fly inſtantly to Bell-vue; and "reſcue from the grave the wrong-"ed, the unfortunate, Adelaide!"

I waited the event in a ſtate little ſhort of deſperation, when the lines I here tranſcribe, which were delivered to me the ſucceeding day, bereaved me of every remaining hope.

"Reproaches

" Reproaches are ill qualified to
" renew abated love; — and the
" charms of Madame de Miran,
" powerful as they are, would be
" insufficient to maintain their em-
" pire, could she expect to reign
" unrivalled in a heart formed for
" inconstancy.

" LEWIS DE ST. AUBIN."

My pride alone could have prevented my sinking under this calamity. — The ingratitude of my cruel husband roused every sentiment which could be inspired by injured love. — I disdained to repeat my upbraidings; but left to time, and the influence of remorse, to plead

plead my cauſe. When the firſt tranſports of my rage ſubſided, the ſofter paſſions ſoon returned;—affection once more mingled with my reſentment; and pity for the yet loved cauſe of all my woes extinguiſhed even the force of jealouſy. A fixed melancholy preyed upon my ſpirits—the tears of ſilent anguiſh rolled inceſſantly down my cheek:—without a friend to participate and ſooth my ſorrows, I was, perhaps, the moſt miſerable being that exiſted. Weeks and months paſſed on, yet my inhuman huſband, ſtill abſent from me, continued his career of fatal follies. To enhance my misfortunes, the period approached which was to render

render me a wretched mother. The force of maternal feelings prevailed upon me to addreſs once more this dear, this cruel huſband! — and to conjure him, for the ſake of an innocent infant, to conſent to receive it at its birth from the arms of a parent who would too probably fall the early ſacrifice of his unkindneſs!

I diſpatched this letter by an old gardener, who was my only male domeſtic—charging him to deliver it himſelf, if poſſible, into the hands of his maſter. — The good man looked at me with honeſt earneſtneſs; and, perceiving that I wept, (though I endeavoured to conceal my emotion) he told me his heart bled

bled for me — that he rejoiced in an opportunity of doing me ſervice, and would not leave Paris till he had executed his commiſſion: — "Be comforted, my ſweet young "lady," continued he, "I will "warrant I ſhall bring happy "tidings."

It was ſo long ſince I had heard the ſoothing voice of kindneſs, that I was ſenſibly affected with the words of this worthy man—I thanked him heartily for his attachment, and aſſured him that, if he ſucceeded, I ſhould ever eſteem him as my guardian angel. — As he was obliged to walk to Paris, I allowed him two days to perform his journey and to return — what an

interval

interval of hope and fear for me! — I watched at my window the whole day which was fixed for his arrival — the tortures of ſuſpenſe that I underwent can only be conceived by thoſe who have loved like me! — At length I perceived him advancing with ſlow and tottering ſteps—I deſcended into the garden, and haſtened to meet my aged meſſenger. — "Oh, Jaquelin," I exclaimed — "do you bring me "life or death!" — He caſt upon me ſuch a look of woe, that, in a moment, I read my diſappointment! — I ſunk down upon the ſtump of an old tree—and, had not a flood of tears ruſhed to my relief, I think I muſt have expired.—The poor old man

man ſtood by, the image of deſpair! — he wrung his withered hands — tore his grey locks — while the big drops rolled down his furrowed cheek! — At length I broke the painful ſilence: — "In pity tell me," I cried, "the extent of my miſery "— I am inured to adverſity — and "ſtand now prepared for all the "horrors of my fate! — Monſieur "de St. Aubin cruelly perſiſts in "abandoning his wretched wife! "— Deaf to the pleadings of nature "and humanity — he leaves his "child an orphan!" — "Alas, "Madam!" replied Jaquelin — "your ſorrows cut my very ſoul! "— but it is in vain to deceive "you — my young maſter has

"quitted

"quitted Paris, and is for ever for
"Italy!—But take comfort—he
"may yet ſoon return."—"Ah!
exclaimed I, ſtrongly agitated—
"can you name me the compa-
"nion of his flight!—too ſurely
"Madame de Miran is the fatal
"object for whom he forſakes the
"unfortunate Adelaide!"——It is
amazing that I could ſupport this
event with ſo much compoſure—
but I confeſs that, at that moment,
I felt the ſhock of his departure
with leſs violence than I ſhould
have done an abſolute refuſal of my
petition—that would have implied
a hardened heart indeed—whereas
his quitting France with the pre-
ſent object of a volatile paſſion

was only the natural effect of female artifice.—Time would diſpel a temporary love; —I conſequently cheriſhed hopes that indifference for my rival might reſtore him to my arms; and founded the flattering expectation from the acknowledged inconſtancy of his diſpoſition. — Upon interrogating my faithful ambaſſador, he confeſſed that Madame de Miran was actually with my wanderer. — Amelia had made no ſecret of it to Jaquelin, but had informed him of it with malicious pleaſure. — He had applied to her for the reſidence of his maſter—and ſhe had vouchſafed to order his admittance into her preſence. — "Upon my deſcribing,"

continued

continued the good man, "your "inquietude, ſhe laughed diſ- "dainfully, and ſaid you might "thank yourſelf for your huſ- "band's infidelity—that your con- "tinued jealouſy and inceſſant "bewailings, for having incurred "by your marriage with him "your parents' diſpleaſure, had "exhauſted her brother's patience; "and entirely extinguiſhed his af- "fections—that, for her part, you "had treated her with too much "inſolence and ingratitude to re- "tain her friendſhip — and that "ſhe was unalterably determined "to trouble herſelf no more about "you! — I preſumed to plead "your cauſe with honeſt warmth

" — but ſhe commanded me to be
" ſilent, and inſiſted upon my retur-
" ing with a tone ſo abſolute, that
" I inſtantly obeyed her. — De-
" termined for your ſake, my dear
" young lady, to gain all the intel-
" ligence I could in this myſterious
" affair, I viſited the ſervants hall
" under pretence of taking ſome
" refreſhment, where I found one
" of the domeſtics as communi-
" cative as I could wiſh.—He told
" me that Madame de St. Aubin,
" who had reſided conſtantly with
" the Viſcount ſince her brother's
" marriage, had eſtabliſhed her in-
" fluence upon the reſentment of
" his father; that without the
" knowledge of the Viſcount ſhe

" privately

" privately visited her brother, and
" had introduced him to a young
" widow of incomparable beauty,
" but light character, with the ini-
" quitous design of separating him
" from you. Her wicked arts pre-
" vailed. — My thoughtless master
" became enamoured with Ma-
" dame de Miran, and was easily
" persuaded, by a cruel sister, to
" abandon his charming wife. Ma-
" dame de St. Aubin foreseeing
" that you, Madam, might again
" allure him to Belle-vue, proposed
" to your rival to draw him into
" Italy, where she flatters herself
" that she will establish her em-
" pire. Her dread of the Viscount's
" reconciliation with his son is an-

" other motive, beſides her hatred
" of you, to promote his abſence:
" the very elopement ſhe herſelf
" conceived and planned has been
" urged by her to her father as
" a freſh proof of my young maſ-
" ter's diſſolute conduct:—in ſhort,
" ſhe uſes every argument to ex-
" aſperate him more againſt you
" both, with the diſhonourable
" view of ſecuring to herſelf his
" noble fortune. It is but too pro-
" bable ſhe will ſucceed; the Viſ-
" count grows infirm—his intel-
" lects decline—and, as ſhe never
" leaves him, ſhe has every advan-
" tage her baſe ſoul can wiſh."
Thus ended the poor old man's narrative. I thanked him for his

honeſt zeal; and to his conſoling and religious admonitions I owed the reſignation with which I endeavoured to ſupport my calamities. My two female attendants were the wife and daughter of this worthy creature; they had been recommended by Amelia upon our firſt arrival at Belle-vue, and, as they had inhabited this houſe for many years, I had no inclination to remove them.

Janetton had nurſed Mademoiſelle de St. Aubin, and Nanette was her foſter-ſiſter. As they were totally dependant on her bounty, it is natural to ſuppoſe they were ſtrictly attached to her: they had frequently attempted to ingratiate

themſelves into my confidence; but I never liked the freedom of their manners; the mother was a compound of low art and fawning flattery; the daughter, of affected ignorance, yet aſſuming pertneſs — I always kept them at a diſtance, and ever preferred ſolitude, and the contemplation of my ſorrows, to their converſation; conſequently they looked upon me as a proud creature, who merited the misfortunes of my deſtiny. — Jaquelin, however, became my favourite — my only friend: — his ſimplicity of manners were marked on his open countenance — his actions were regulated by the principles of virtue, and his ſentiments ſpoke the language

guage of a heart which would have done honour to exalted rank. One day Janetton aſked my permiſſion to make a viſit to a ſick aunt in Paris: I readily granted her requeſt, and conſented to ſpare her for a couple of days. After dinner I ſtrolled into the garden, which I commonly did every afternoon, though the coldneſs of the weather rendered it far from pleaſant.—The good Jaquelin met me, and, reſpectfully accoſting me, begged I would inform him whether his wife had received my permiſſion to attend Mademoiſelle de St. Aubin!—I looked ſurpriſed, and anſwered that ſhe had mentioned the illneſs of an aunt as the motive of her abſence.

abſence. "Then," replied he, "ſhe "has deceived you Madam—by "Nanette's confeſſion to me ſhe "is going to Paris upon the ſum- "mons of Mademoiſelle de St. "Aubin, who has ſent for her a "horſe and ſervant, which myſ- "teriouſly waited at the corner of "the lane; and the jade is actually "departed without even conſult- "ing my pleaſure.—She is gone "to plot and act miſchief with that "implacable fury!"—"Compoſe "yourſelf, my good friend," re- turned I, "no harm can en- "ſue from this viſit.—Alas! what "further injury can Amelia offer "the wretched Adelaide!—her "cruel vengeance has been long

"complete,

" complete, and I am now reduced
" below her malice!—It is natural
" ſhe ſhould regard her nurſe,
" barbarian as ſhe is; — and I
" would upon no account de-
" prive your wife of any mark of
" her lady's liberality." — " Ah,
" you are too good for this world!"
replied Jaquelin, ſhaking his head:
" but, however, had I been at
" home time enough to coun-
" teract your orders (which, upon
" this occaſion, I ſhould have taken
" the liberty of doing), Janetton
" ſhould have found me once too
" cunning for her." — He left me
muttering to himſelf, and ſhrug-
ing up his ſhoulders, to vent upon
Nanette the overflowings of that
well-meant

well-meant zeal for his unfortunate miſtreſs, which ſuperſeded in his boſom even his conjugal and parental affections.

Janetton punctually returned on the appointed day; and, more officious than ever to pleaſe, became rather troubleſome by her aſſiduities — but, irkſome as they were, being conſcious that I ſhould too ſoon require her tenderneſs and care, I pretended to receive them with gratitude. In regard to my own life I ſhould have been totally indifferent; but, as far as it was concerned with that of an innocent infant, whoſe exiſtence I ardently wiſhed to preſerve, (in hopes of preſenting it ſome day to an affec-

tionate

tionate father) I reſolved no attention ſhould be wanting on my part which maternal duty could ſuggeſt.—I even began to take ſome degree of delight in arranging a nurſery; and muſed, with melancholy pleaſure, upon the future bleſſing yet in ſtore.—Though, alas! in anticipating a mother's fondneſs I painfully regretted my happineſs muſt be incomplete in the agonizing recollection of my forſaken widowed ſtate!"—I was rouſed from one of theſe reveries by Jaquelin's knocking at my chamber door. I ſat reclining on a chair, one foot reſting on the rocker of a cradle, which, with involuntary motion, rolled it deliberately

berately to and fro, with as much care as if it were already the repoſitory of a ſleeping infant.—The door opened, and diſcovered to my view my good old friend bending under the weight of a large coffer.—His countenance was unuſually gay—he placed his load upon the table,—"There," ſaid he, "thank God, "Providence has ſent us ſome-"thing."—He proceeded to untie the cordage—"But how," ſaid I; "did you gain poſſeſſion of this "prize?—Are you very certain "that it belongs to us?"—"Aye, "by St. Jerome does it," replied he;—"is not your name St. Au-"bin?—Look at the addreſs."—I roſe to examine it—but what va-

rious

rious emotions of hope and fear I ſuſtained upon diſcovering the well-known characters to be written by my beloved mother! — I claſped my uplifted hands with tranſport, and uttered my grateful thanks to that Being who ſeemed now to look with pity on me!

When Jaquelin had finiſhed opening it — "There," ſaid he, "my "ſweet miſtreſs; feaſt yourſelf with "the contents, and believe old "Jaquelin another time."—So ſaying, the worthy creature left me. For ſome moments I was incapable of examining the trunk; my whole frame ſhook with an univerſal tremour. — At length my trembling hands removed the paper which

was

was ſpread upon the ſurface; and I found, to my aſtoniſhment, a complete ſet of the moſt elegant infant habiliments. In vain I ſearched for a few lines of maternal tenderneſs, to convey one gentle bleſſing to my contrite heart, revoking the cruel ſentence of a father's curſe!—Suddenly I eſpied, at the bottom of the box, two papers, ſealed up and directed to Adelaide.—The firſt contained a beautiful gold coral, which had been mine in infancy, richly adorned with jewels, and ſtamped with the initials of my name—the other enveloped a hundred louis d'ors—but no addreſs to myſelf had I the happineſs to find!—however I looked

looked upon theſe unexpected attentions as auſpicious omens of a future pardon.—I wept for near an hour, with tears of heartfelt gratitude, over theſe tokens of a mother's care; and, at length, calling in my three domeſtics, in the effuſion of my joy I made them the partakers of ſo flattering an event; and aſked Jaquelin from whence he had received the box; he informed me that, on opening a back door, he found it placed upon the ſtep; and that, on reading the ſuperſcription, he brought it inſtantly to me.—I perceived Janetton and Nanette to look ſignificantly upon one another, and that their reſpect conſiderably increaſed though—I

thought I traced upon the countenance of the former a kind of conſcious ſhame, which I attributed to the corrections of remorſe for having attempted to deceive me in her late excurſion to Paris.—I made each of them a preſent out of my little ſtore: — the old man would have rejected the donation, and have prevented their receiving it, but I made a point of his accepting theſe tokens of my friendſhip.

I had undergone too much agitation to attempt to write that day; and deferred, therefore, till the next, a letter of acknowledgment to my generous mother: — but, alas! my appointed hour was come!—I was taken ill before this taſk of duty

was

was performed!—For ſeveral days my life was deſpaired of; during which interval I was totally inſenſible to all around me.—Upon the return of recollection I perceived Janetton watching by my bedſide;—I feebly drew aſide the curtain, through which I had diſcovered her ſhadow; and my longing eye ſought in vain for the ſweet reward of all my anguiſh.—With difficulty I uttered, "Where, where, is "my child?"—Janetton looked diſtreſſed, put her finger to her mouth, and endeavoured to compoſe me; obſerving, at the ſame time, an apparent intention not to anſwer: but, upon my repeating the queſtion with viſible inquie-

tude—"Huſh, Madam!" ſaid ſhe, in a low voice, "be ſilent, and do "not agitate yourſelf."—She officiouſly brought me a cordial, which I patiently ſwallowed; and, ringing a bell, Nanette appeared.—The mother, for an inſtant, forgot her own advice, and ſhouted out—"A miracle!—A miracle!—Ma-"dame's ſenſes are reſtored!"—I looked wiſhfully at Nanette; and, ſuppoſing ſhe came from the adjacent nurſery, I entreated her, in a whiſper, to bring my infant, adding that the ſight of ſuch a treaſure would be the moſt effectual reſtorative they could adminiſter:—I pauſed, and liſtened with anxious ears if I could catch the plaintive

ſounds

ſounds of thoſe endearing cries which cling round the fond mother's heart — but hearing none — "It ſleeps," I cried, — "my "cherub ſleeps! — Oh! guardian "angels, watch its ſlumbers!" — They looked at each other, then at me, and continued ſilent. — "Well," ſaid I, endeavouring to riſe in my bed, — "if you are "cruel enough to keep it from "my ſight, I will ſeek for it my-"ſelf at the peril of my life.—I attempted, indeed, to riſe, but ſunk down again upon my pillow from total weakneſs: however, I aſſumed ſtrength enough to ſay, in a reſolute tone, that I inſiſted upon being obeyed.—They then whiſpered to-

gether, and, by degrees, at length informed me (what I began to ſuſpect) that my unfortunate ſon ſurvived his birth but a few hours!—Though I ſenſibly felt this additional ſtroke of fate, yet the weakneſs of my frame prevented my expreſſing any outrageous grief!—I raiſed my languid eyes to heaven, and ſilently ſubmitted to its decrees.—By ſlow advances I gradually mended—my youth and conſtitution repulſed the complicated force of bodily malady and mental anguiſh; and I lived to encounter and ſurvive greater evils than I had yet experienced!

I firſt employed my returning ſtrength to write a letter, fraught,

with

with duty, penitence, and gratitude, to my mother. It ſenſibly wounded me to name the man ſtill too dear to my affections with reproach;—but, as I was conſcious that the tongue of fame would, even were I ſilent on the ſubject, proclaim my injuries, I informed her that my diſobedience had been amply revenged in the inconſtancy of a huſband—and once more implored her to permit an unfortunate and contrite daughter to ſue for pardon at her honoured feet!—Several times, during my confinement, I had anxiouſly inquired for my poor Jaquelin; and, after repeated evaſions, was grieved by the intelligence that the good creature had,

in an expedition to Paris on horſe-back, fallen from his horſe, and diſlocated his leg; but that, by the humanity of Mademoiſelle de St. Aubin, at whoſe houſe he was attended by an eminent ſurgeon, he was likely to do well.—If Jaquelin had been my parent I could ſcarce have felt more than I did on his account; and I entreated that, when he could be moved with ſafety, he might be tranſported in a horſe-litter to Belle-vue.

As ſoon as I was ſufficiently recovered to venture into the air, I inſiſted upon being directed to the ſpot which contained the relics of my departed ſon.—In a wilderneſs of ſhrubs I diſcovered his little grave!—

grave! — here every emotion of maternal tenderneſs agonized my heart! — As I was totally inſenſible from the hour of his birth, and he had been depoſited in the ground before I was reſtored to recollection, I now, for the firſt time, approached my child!—Ah! how approached him! — not with the tranſports of a happy mother, who preſſes to claſp to her fond boſom the blooming pledge of hymeneal love! — Exchanged for the ſoft cradle of repoſing infancy—was the cold bed of death! — the promiſed comfort of my future days wrapped in eternal ſleep! — Sweet babe!— thou never kneweſt a parent!— thy ill-fated birth was but the paſſ-

port

port to an early tomb!—Had heaven, in pity for thy wretched mother, permitted her to lay her burthen down, and share thy grave, the bleſſing would have been a compenſation for her ſorrows.—The outcaſt daughter—the childleſs mother—and the widowed wife—had been at reſt, and all her woes forgotten!—but juſtice ſuffers not rewards of guilt!—The ungrateful fugitive, who had plunged a dagger in the boſom of thoſe who gave her being, was decreed to feel maternal anguiſh; and where ſhe inflicted the wound herſelf to bleed!

When I had relieved the oppreſſion of my heart by torrents of aſ-

ſiſting

ſifting tears, I quitted the dear ſpot which contained my lifeleſs treaſure; — here I made each morn a ſadly ſoothing viſit — here daily paid the tributary debt of Nature's grief — till a calm and gentle melancholy ſucceeded the violence of recent ſorrow. I anxiouſly waited the return of Jaquelin, to whoſe honeſt hands I deſtined an employment his zeal for my repoſe I knew would execute with joy — it was to protect from the inclement ſkies the repoſitory of my loſt hope! — there I meant to rear the ever-verdant laurel — the ſilver fir and lofty cedar: — theſe were to repel the winter's blaſt; and ſummer's zephyrs were to waft the ſpicy

ſweets

ſweets of intermingling flowers.—Pardon, Henrietta! — my deareſt, my ſole ſurviving friend!—pardon the wretch who fondly dwells upon the loved remembrance of her loſt child!—thou wilt one day feel a mother's tranſport!—Oh! mayeſt thou never know a mother's anguiſh!—thy ſpotleſs virtues will ſecure thoſe bleſſings which retribution's juſtice granted to me alone for puniſhments!

I now began to deſpair of ever beholding again my ſtill, ſtill dear inconſtant!—yet found myſelf but ill prepared for the fatal blow impending on my head!—I was muſing at a window upon my misfortunes, when Le Claire, the valet

of

of Monſieur de St. Aubin, galloped up to the gate!—my eyes had only power to ſeek in vain one flattering inſtant for the loved cauſe of all my ſorrows!—they grew dim!—my ſenſes failed me!—and I ſunk upon the floor;—when I recovered, I found Janetton and Nanette buſily occupied in reſtoring me to life—I puſhed them from me, and called aloud for Le Claire—he ruſhed into my preſence—"Tell "me—tell me" exclaimed I—"where haſt thou left my huſ-"band?"—he bowed reſpectfully, looked diſtreſſed, and was ſilent—"Oh", cried I, franticly claſping my hands—"in pity to a wretch, "confeſs what led thee hither!—

"fear

"fear not to impart thy embodily—
"does thy inhuman master destine
"me new insults!"—"Alas, Ma-
"dam! my master!"—replied he
mournfully—"he is incapable
"of offending more—Mademoi-
"selle de St. Aubin commanded me
"to come—reluctantly I obeyed—
"my respect, my gratitude, re-
"coiled at the idea of adding to
"such sorrows!"—"How," cried
I,—"is not that cruel woman yet
"weary of persecuting an unhappy
"wife through her arts—forsaken
"by the man who should be her
"protector!

"What fresh instance of a hus-
"band's perfidy does her barbarity
"prepare for me!"—"Alas!"—
replied

replied Le Claire—"you have "nothing more to ſuffer from my "unfortunate, miſguided maſter! "—he has made a fatal atonement "for all his errors!"

"Gracious God!"—exclaimed I—while a thrilling horrour ran through my veins—"what "dreadful tale haſt thou to tell, "and I to hear!—my prophetic "fears pronounce that I have no "more a huſband!"

He ſhook his head, turned away his eyes, which gave teſtimony to his feelings—but anſwered not!—I ſunk upon my knees; and every tender ſentiment, which in the dawn of love had attached my ſoul, ruſhed into my boſom with redoubled

redoubled force.—"Oh! St. Au-
"bin!—my adored St. Aubin!"—
I cried, "then thou art gone for
"ever!—never till this moment
"was Adelaide irreparably—truly
"wretched!—not even thy incon-
"ſtancy could efface my love!—
"Amidſt my ſorrows I cheriſhed
"ſtill the dear remembrance of thy
"former kindneſs—the ſoothing
"hope of thy reſtored affections!
"—Oh! that I had died with thee!
"—one grave would have united
"us; and thou couldeſt not have
"eſcaped me beyond the cold con-
"fines of the tomb!"

Thus did I rave on—nor did I
ſhed one tear.—To move me, Le
Claire began the ſubject of his death
—I ſat motionleſs upon the ſeat, to
which

which they had raiſed me; and, notwithſtanding my agony of mind, I heard diſtinctly every word he uttered. — He informed me that his maſter, having accompanied Madame de Miran to Florence, had by various attachments awakened the jealouſy of my rival — that, in particular, a beautiful Italian, named Seraphina, had inſpired him with admiration; but that ſtill he neglected not Madame de Miran, at whoſe palace he reſided in great ſplendour — but one day having, by her emiſſaries, gained private intelligence of an aſſignation with Seraphina, Madame de Miran found means to inſpire her new rival with ſo ſtrong a ſuſpi-

cion of his falſehood, that, in the extravagant height of jealous fury, ſhe infuſed a deadly poiſon into ſome lemonade which was preſented to her lover, and which, in a few hours, terminated his life in ſtrong convulſions.—Seraphina repented, too late, her barbarous revenge, and abſconded to a convent before the event was made public.—Le Claire attended his expiring maſter in his laſt moments, who expreſſed, in ſome of his ſhort intervals of ſpeech, the tendereſt remorſe for me!—"Oh, "my Adelaide! my injured wife!" he cried, "may my death expiate "my crimes recommend the an-

"gel

" gel ſufferer to my father! — if
" there yet exiſts a pledge of our
" unfortunate union, may the child
" recompenſe the mother's wrongs!
" —Oh, Adelaide!—had I ſooner
" become ſenſible of thy virtues
" we had both been happy!

" Amelia, that cruel ſiſter, has
" undone me! — like a dark fiend
" ſhe ſeduced my weak unguarded
" heart to the falſe pleaſures of al-
" luring vice;—whilſt thou, bright
" ſeraph, robed in innocence, and
" blooming with matchleſs beauty,
" ſtretched in vain thy lovely hand
" to ſave me! — Had fate permit-
" ed me extent of life, thou wouldſt
" have beheld low at thy feet a
" ſuppliant lover and repentant

" huſband — but, doomed to fall
" the victim of my crimes, the
" exſtatic bliſs of thy pronounced
" forgiveneſs is denied even in the
" deciſive hour of death! — The
" muſic of thy voice would have
" allayed the pang of anguiſh, and
" ſoothed the horrors of a dying
" moment—Bleſs her, oh gracious
" heaven! and receive into thy
" mercy the deluded ſoul who,
" with fervent penitence, implores
" thy pardon!" — He ſpoke — he
ſighed — he died! — Le Claire
quitted not the remains of his loved
maſter till he ſaw them depoſited
in hallowed earth. Madame de
Miran, in the agonies of deſpair
at his loſs, had cauſed his funeral
obſequies

obſequies to be performed with ſolemn pomp; and had abſolutely refuſed her permiſſion for his body to be removed to France. When Le Claire dwelt upon the tender ſubject of St. Aubin's affecting ſenſibility for me, the torrent of my tears guſhed out — they afforded me a temporary relief, and enabled me to aſk him if he had unfolded this ſad event by the command of Amelia? — He anſwered in the affirmative; and that, having peremptorily denied his humble requeſt—that ſhe would ſpare him a commiſſion, for which he was ill qualified—and urged her in vain to break it cautiouſly, either by her preſence or her pen, ſhe had im-

poſed on him the painful taſk, and charged him with this additional information, which the poor man uttered reluctantly — that, as I had by my wayward humours baniſhed her brother from his native country, and had conſequently been the cauſe of his miſerable and ſhameful death, I had no longer any right to claim protection from the Viſcount de St. Aubin. That our alliance was now diſſolved, and he expected me to quit, in a few days, a reſidence I had enjoyed already unmoleſted but too long; and that ſhe did not doubt but my parents would generouſly provide for their widowed runaway, ſince

ſince the cauſe of her diſobedience, having become the victim of my imprudence, was now no more. — "Yes," cried I, animated with indignation, "voluntarily ſhall I reſign a dependence "to which I would prefer the moſt "ſavage deſert. — Tell this implacable, this inhuman ſiſter, that, "ſenſible it is to her I owe all my "miſeries, I attribute to her malice the inconſtancy of my wronged huſband, and his fatal end! — "Tell her that beggary is preferable to her aſſiſtance; and that, "though my juſtly offended parents were to carry their reſentment beyond his grave to the "widow of St. Aubin, and ſhould

"ſpurn their wretched daughter
"from their feet, ſhe would ſink
"a prey to poverty and want, ra-
"ther than accept from her hands
"the ſmalleſt pittance to allay her
"hunger."

Though the diſtraction of my mind was little calculated to expreſs my ſentiments on paper, yet I conſidered that my duty demanded my giving immediate information to my mother of my preſent unfortunate ſituation, conjuring her to plead for her wretched daughter; and preſuming to hope that, ſince thoſe ties were fatally broken which had juſtly occaſioned the reſentment of my parents, I might be bleſſed with their forgiveneſs ere

I ſunk

I ſunk down in ſorrow to the grave! Intruſting my letter to the conveyance of Le Claire, I waited the event of this laſt effort with unutterable anguiſh!—I attempted not to go to bed, but aſſiſted my two attendants in packing up my apparel ready for a final removal from Belle-vue, where I determined not to remain another day, whatever were the conſequences. The inſulting commands of Amelia, to reſign a habitation to which the unhappy widow of her brother was ſurely no leſs entitled than his forſaken wife, had rouſed my pride and indignation, ſentiments which no doubt prevented my wounded

ſpirit

ſpirit from yielding to the oppreſſive weight of accumulated woe!

Le Claire returned not till near four in the morning, as he found, on his arrival in Paris, my father's houſe ſhut up; and received information that the family had reſided for ſome months entirely in the country. Having obtained a direction to their abode, he loſt no time in purſuing a journey of ſo much conſequence to me; and had the ſatisfaction of bringing me a letter, which he hoped would prove a conſolation to my diſtreſs. I thanked and rewarded my faithful meſſenger for his diligence:—taking, with trembling hands, this

dreaded

dreaded letter, I found the welcome, unhoped-for offer of an aſylum under my parental roof, upon condition that I reſumed the name of Tourville, and reſigned all future acquaintance with St. Aubin's family. — The latter was an injunction I had no temptation to reſiſt—the former was a circumſtance too indifferent to me to refuſe. The next day their carriage drove to the door, and I quitted a manſion where I had paſſed the happieſt and moſt wretched of my days. One tie alone attached my lingering heart to Belle-vue — I could not, without regret, for ever leave the remains of my loſt child! I ſhed my laſt tear upon his grave,

and

and tore myſelf eternally from an object which, while it fed my ſorrows, ſoothed their anguiſh.—My mother received me with encircling arms; —ſhe led me trembling into the preſence of my father—I ſunk at his feet, not daring to lift up my eyes to meet his awful frown— "Oh, forgive! forgive!" was all I could articulate.—He deigned to raiſe me with relenting kindneſs— "Thy misfortunes, and thy repent- "ance, Adelaide," ſaid he, "have "expiated thy fault:—thou art for- "given!"—I kiſſed with tranſport his extended hand—"Ah," cried my mother, "how ſhe is changed! "her emaciated form ſcarce bears "the ſemblance of her former ſelf.

"—Come,

"— Come, my poor child, and let
"the balm of comfort once more
"revisit thy much injured heart!
"the story of thy wrongs are all
"confirmed in those sunk eyes,
"and that wan cheek!" — She folded me in her maternal arms, and wiped the tears that in abundance rolled.—To this dear parent I unbosomed all my griefs — sweet pity melted in her gentle heart!— but soon she taught me, from the mild reasoning of true religion, that resignation to the will of heaven, from which the inexperienced ear of youth too often turns.

I now hoped to have devoted my remaining days to watch, with duteous care, the declining years

of

of thoſe beloved parents, whoſe tender affection for their erring child ſeemed to bury in oblivion all the fatal paſt!—I flattered myſelf my filial attentions might in ſome degree compenſate for the diſappointment I had cauſed them —but alas!—the meaſure of my misfortunes was yet to be completed!—too ſoon the moſt painful taſk of duty claimed my care!—to ſmooth the bed of ſickneſs—to alleviate the pang of death!—theſe were the mournful offices which ſucceeded a huſband's murder!—my father was ſeized with a malady, which baffled all the power of medicine—it threatened immediate diſſolution, and prepared my exemplary

exemplary mother for an eternal ſeparation!—My terrors upon the proſpect of an event too certain, from the rapid progreſs of this diſorder, ſuperſeded even the anxious fears I had ſecretly indulged upon her account.—The ſymptoms of a decaying conſtitution made me anticipate, with dread, a mother's fate:—but my father's ſudden and nearer danger engroſſed every fear and every care for him!—I never quitted this dear, this dying parent—but watched conſtantly by his bed-ſide, ſilently invoking heaven with fervent prayers to ſpare his valued life.—I adminiſtered every remedy during the ſhort abſences of my mother,

which he received from my hands with looks of ſpeechleſs gratitude —I had juſt aſſiſted him to change the poſture of his reſtleſs head— he gazed upon me with expreſſive tenderneſs — he preſſed me with his clay-cold hand—and in an inſtant breathed within my arms his laſt expiring ſigh!——

At this awful moment my burſting ſoul ſeemed ready to break through the limits of mortality, and, quivering on the wings of life, to take its flight with his who gave me being!—but the recollection of a remaining claim upon my duty baniſhed the impious wiſh.

I ſought my widowed mother in an adjoining room, whither ſhe had

had not been long retired before the partner of her heart was ſunk to final ſleep:—ſhe was reſting on her knees, her eyes were raiſed to heaven!—but her whole mind, animated by devotion, ſpoke in her countenance.—I was ſilent, not daring to interrupt her ſacred meditation!—at length, ſuddenly turning towards me, as I ſtood weeping by, ſhe aroſe; and, tenderly wiping my trickling tears—"I read, my child, in your affliction," ſaid ſhe, aſſuming a firmneſs of voice—"that hope is now "no more—thou haſt cloſed a "father's eyes. Alas, my Adelaide! "—how enviable the fate we "mourn,—the dead are happy—

"the living only wretched! — I
"have prayed for reſignation; and,
"I thank heaven, I feel at this
"moment its gracious ſupport —
"ſoon, very ſoon, we ſhall be re-
"united — what rapture in the
"thought, were it not for the
"ſad reflection that thou muſt be
"left an unprotected orphan in a
"barbarous world! — but, my be-
"loved daughter," looking ſted-faſtly at me with a penetrating eye, — "let religion be thy guide,
"thy monitor, thy friend — and
"thou wilt never miſs the empty
"ſhade of friendſhip."

I could only anſwer with my tears — ſhe ſtrained me to her arms, and thus continued — "for-
"bear, my child, to move me —

"my

"my reſolution ſhakes—I muſt "withdraw a little to confirm my "ſtrength of mind, but will rejoin "you ſoon, my love!"—So ſaying, this incomparable woman, recommending me tenderly to the care of a faithful and favourite domeſtic, who had been my nurſe, and ordering not to be interrupted unleſs ſhe rang her bell, retired to her cloſet, where ſhe continued ſome hours.—As ſhe had taken no refreſhment ſince the morning, I began to be anxious when the hour of ſeven ſtruck—I ventured to approach the door, notwithſtanding her prohibition, and gently tapt—ſhe opened it herſelf—her face was pale, her voice was lan-

guid;—but ſhe endeavoured to aſſume a cheerful aſpect. — Ninon followed me with a bouillon; ſhe ſwallowed it in compliance with my entreaties; but aſſured me, preſſing my hand, that ſhe found herſelf drowſy, and the compoſure of ſleep was all ſhe wanted.—I urged her to go to bed; but ſhe preferred reſting on a couch in her cloſet—we aſſiſted her in reclining upon it; and, in oppoſition to her entreaties that I would leave her, I placed myſelf at her feet to watch her ſlumbers—ſhe raiſed her head from the pillow, fixed upon me a heavenly animated ſmile, which I never ſhall forget — and ſunk into a gentle ſleep.—I contemplated the

ſweet

ſweet ſerenity of her countenance till the ſhades of night obſcured her from my view — Ninon was approaching with a light, but I waved my hand, and pointed to her to place it in the antichamber. —Another hour I watched, till two or three deep ſighs made me fear ſhe ſlept uneaſy; I fetched the candle; and, putting it on a cabinet, made a gentle effort to turn her; her hands were cold and clammy, and big drops of water ran down her face;—terrified, I ſcreamed — Ninon flew from the adjoining room — the good Ninon, who inſtantly diſcovered the fatal truth, attempted to pour a cordial into her mouth, but ineffectually! —

her jaw was fixed, and her eyes closed for ever!—Now was my misery complete! and one fatal day deprived me of those dear protectors I had so late regained!—I continued some days in a state of stupefaction — nor could all the affectionate zeal of my poor Ninon dissipate my grief.—The arrival of Monsieur de Tourville, the nephew of my father, roused me from this lethargy of woe—I could not refuse to see him; he was appointed sole executor; and from him I was obliged to learn the decision of the will. I found my unfortunate marriage had entirely altered my father's plan in regard to the disposition of his fortune: — but he bequeathed

bequeathed every thing to me, on condition that I accepted the hand of his nephew — otherwise, I was only entitled to a third of his money: the remainder, with his eſtates, devolved to Monſieur de Tourville, in caſe of my refuſal. I need not mention this was the deſtined huſband of my father's choice—Had my dear parents ſurvived my term of mourning, it was no doubt their intention to preſent again this long-ſelected lover to my acceptance; but their tender conſideration for a grief, which, though I never ventured to expreſs, was yet viſible in my countenance, prompted them to forbear

touching on a ſubject which muſt wound a yet bleeding heart.

My couſin was a man of figure and addreſs; and ſeemed little prepared for the indignity of a ſecond rejection. However, as I had unalterably determined never again to yield my widowed hand, I heſitated not to aſſure him, that though I eſteemed his character, and revered my father's choice, yet, from an inviolable attachment to the memory of my huſband, I never could enter into a ſecond engagement; adding, that I voluntarily ſubmitted to the reſignation of a forfeit fortune; wiſhing him with another that happineſs which it was not in the power of a broken heart

to beſtow! — The unconditional money I found myſelf intitled to was amply ſufficient to procure me every elegance of life, were I capable, in the dejected ſtate of my mind, to enjoy affluence; and I murmured not at a deciſion which my breach of duty had fully juſtified.—My ſpirits, ſubdued by repeated misfortunes, ſought ſhelter from the world in retirement and devotion.

Pardon me if I have dwelt too minutely on a detail you exacted from me. — The recital of calamities, ſo recently endured, have inadvertently flowed from the pen of ſorrow.

Thus,

Thus, my beloved Henrietta, have I revealed each circumſtance of my yet ſhort life, and proved, by my fatal experience, the puniſhments that wait on filial diſobedience!—Your affection alone is left to attach me to the world!—Diſappointed in the tendereſt love—torn from the aſſiduities of duty—what tie but that of friendſhip yet remains!—If, after a tale of woe like mine, you can propoſe any pleaſure in the ſociety of its unfortunate heroine, I will conſent to forſake for you a ſecluſion which, when I entered, I never meant to quit.—But ſpare me, my Henrietta, the pang of witneſſing thoſe ſolemn rites which would recall a

day

day, to my remembrance, I would for ever banish from my thoughts. I will obey the first summons that proclaims you a happy wife.—On my devoted head may every misery, resulting from an ill-fated marriage, have justly been exhausted.—On your propitious hymen may smiling peace, domestic harmony, and mutual love, for ever wait; and time alone dissolve the tender union!

Such are the wishes—such the ardent prayers of

The unfortunate,

But faithful,

ADELAIDE.

When Madame de St. Aubin, whom we ſhall hereafter diſtinguiſh by that name, which ſhe now reſumed, had made the Marchioneſs partaker of this intereſting diſcovery, ſhe requeſted permiſſion to preſent Auguſtus in his new character. — Julia bluſhed, from the recollection of their laſt interview, but could not refuſe admittance to the ſon of her beloved friend! — ſhe approached her with trembling awe; — but ſhe ſealed his pardon with ſo ſweet a ſmile, and congratulated him upon the denouëment of his birth with ſuch unaffected pleaſure, that he felt reſtored to new life. — Not ſo the young Viſcounteſs — ſhe received the information

formation with a ſecret mortifica-tion—her antipathy to Madame de Tourville predominated over the pride of rank on the occaſion.—The conſcious hauteur and arrogant contempt ſhe had ſhewn for her opinion could not reconcile her to the reſpect that was due to the mother of her huſband.—She returned a cold ſalute for her maternal embrace; and, with a reſerved formality, felicitated the new Viſcount de St. Aubin.—Auguſtus approached Leonora with an air of tender ſatisfaction, and aſſured her that his happineſs, upon ſo flattering a diſcovery, derived its ſource from the affections of his heart, ſince it had given to him

the

the most amiable of mothers, and suffered that rank to a lovely wife which the late uncertainty of his descent had cruelly obscured.—With a satyrical smile she answered—"That your dubious birth is "thus decided with the array of "exterior honours—I rejoice for "your own sake—it was otherwise "totally indifferent to the daughter "of the Baron de Neuville, who, "reflecting splendour by her own "alliance, could not be herself de-"graded."—With this equivocal reply she turned haughtily away, and retired from the joyous buz of gratulations in which her inconstant heart bore so little share.—The Marquis, the Marchioness, and

their

their brother, affected their compliments on the occasion with well-counterfeited satisfaction; but Monsieur and Madame de Senanges sympathized in this event with all the natural warmth of undissembled friendship.

As the next day was to be the day of general separation, the lovely widow, whose every action was regulated by the most scrupulous and delicate propriety, had predetermined to pay her sons the respect of appearing at the table, and to pass the last evening in the public society of her friends.—The interesting event which had opened to her beloved Tourville a scene of present rapture and future compensation

ſation for a life of ſorrow, by the unhoped-for reſtoration of a long-loſt ſon, gave to her depreſſed heart a ray of ſoothing pleaſure, and ſhe joined the aſſembly in the ſaloon with an air of contentment, if not of happineſs.—She entered with that unaſſuming, natural dignity, which was inſeparable from her every movement; and advanced to meet the Marchioneſs, with whom the preſent was the firſt interview.—This haughty woman was prepared to view her with the arrogance of rival charms and jealous conſequence;—but the ſweet ſmile that beamed benignant in the eyes of Julia, and animated the magic graces of her features, had the

wondrous

wondrous power to ſubdue, by a momentary impulſe of conſcious inferiority, that vain pride which ſwelled her heart.—But envy ſoon diſpelled the tranſient virtue—and Julia's beauty, too radiant for the eye of malice, effaced the impreſſion that her condeſcenſion had made.

When ſhe approached the young Viſcounteſs with her congratulations ſhe affectionately embraced her—"Joy to my Leonora," ſhe ſoftly ſaid:—"may the event of "this intereſting day be a prelude "to future added bleſſings—and "may Madame de St. Aubin, as ſhe "is the loveliеſt, be long the happieſt of wives!"——

Leonora, from the conscious reproaches of her own ungrateful mind, looked evidently abashed—she blushed her thanks, and turned from the Marchioness with embarrassed precipitation.—The anxious mother of Augustus, drawing him apart to have a short conference with him previous to the hour of general meeting, mildly remonstrated with him upon his neglects towards his fair wife:—"Think "not, my son," said she, "that "I mean to usurp, from parental "privilege, controul over your ac-"tions:—hear me not as a mo-"ther, but the tenderest friend:—"one who would guide you through "the

" the intricate path bestrewed by
" guilty passion!—Let not unfor-
" tunate prepossession of your
" heart influence you to treat her
" more with cruel disregard—you
" received her from the hands of a
" doating father—he reposed in
" you implicit confidence—he re-
" signed to you his dearest trea-
" sure!—be faithful to the trust—
" beware of setting her an example
" of indifference, which, in wound-
" ing her tenderness, may betray
" her into some fatal weakness!—
" Let your strict adherence to the
" solemn vows which joined you
" at the altar preserve her faith
" inviolate!—let her find in her
" husband the protector of her in-

"nocence — the guardian of her
"honour!"—She paused—"I bow
"to your merited rebukes," replied
Auguſtus, "conſcious of my er-
"ror. — Yes, Madam, my heart,
"enſlaved even to faſcination by
"one too lovely object, has forgot
"the duties which engaged him in
"a voluntary union to another. —
"The mind which derives from
"you its being ſhall learn to emu-
"late your virtues. — From Ade-
"laide's unprecedented wrongs her
"ſon ſhall learn the juſtice due to
"Leonora. — My future conduct
"ſhall atone my fault; and though
"my affections are irrevocably fix-
"ed, never will they tempt me to
"betray the vow which honour

"renders

"renders binding.—Oh, my ſweet
"monſtreſs!" raiſing to his lips
Madame de St. Aubin's hand,
"never can my mother plead in
"vain!"—She ſmiled upon Auguſtus with fond delight, while the tear of pleaſure trickled from her eye.—With theſe tender impreſſions he followed her into the ſaloon.

The etiquette of the ſeparate routes which the parting families were to take had been previouſly ſettled—Monſieur and Madame de St. Aubin were to return to the Baron de Neuville's, when the Marchioneſs and their mother accompanied the Count and Counteſs to Senanges.

Augustus secretly rejoiced in his approaching departure, as the vicinity of the Baron's mansion to that of the Count would give him frequent opportunities of beholding his adored Julia; but Leonora, with regret, quitted a spot which, from the dangerous presence of Henry de Soissons, was become too interesting — she dreaded to encounter the penetrating eye of a father whose virtuous precepts, the same principles she had now imbibed, taught her to consider as the severe restrictions of rigorous age.

The new Marchioness and the ill-judging Leonora attempted not to conceal the mutual reluctance with which they parted; but openly

 lamented

lamented that the dull forms of duty which recalled the latter to her father obliged them to submit to a temporary separation.— And, without even referring to the opinion of Augustus, she promised to join the Marchioness at Paris the moment she could release herself from parental bondage.—Monsieur de St. Aubin observed, with astonishment, an affectation of levity of which he had hitherto thought the innocent heart of Leonora incapable. At first he considered this newly-assumed character as an artful manœuvre to recall his attentions. Conscious of having treated her with indifference he sincerely reproached himself with his ingra-

titude to a wife who he imagined truly loved him; and determined to render himself more worthy her affections.—Little did he conceive the attachment she had professed for him capable of change; much less could he suspect that she had already transferred her inconstant heart to his unworthy rival!—He took her tenderly by the hand—"Permit me to hope, my Leonora," said he, "that there are ties even "stronger than parental ones; and "that, should the converse of a fa-"ther grow insipid, the attentions "of a husband may restore to soli-"tude its former charms."—Withdrawing her hand with a haughty air, which she changed into a smile

of contempt—"Perhaps, Sir," said she, "those attentions may be found "under the roof of the Baron de "Neuville, since they followed us "not to the Chateau de Soissons."—Monsieur de St. Aubin, struck with the justice of this rebuke, made no reply.—Julia, though unobserved, partook of his confusion; and too well convinced she had been herself the innocent but fatal cause of his indifference, felt upon her cheek a conscious glow, and in her eye a trembling tear.—She conceived that Leonora entertained a secret jealousy on her account; but it was a total misapprehension which the delicacy of her sentiments occasioned in the conduct of those unfortunate and vir-

tuous

tuous lovers was too guarded to create even the shadow of suspicion.

The Baron embraced his children at their return with transport.—He had constantly received immediate intimation of the minutest events relative to the discovery made by the late Marquis, who had honourably confided with the Baron, previous to their marriage, the important secret of his adopted son's mysterious birth.

An express having informed Monsieur de Neuville the preceding day of the real name and descent of Augustus, he welcomed him most affectionately; rejoicing, for his sake, that the cloud which had obscured his fate some days was so happily

dispersed.

dispersed.—In vain the Visconti endeavoured, by tender and constant assiduities, to raise the drooping spirits of his wife—she received them with forbidding coldness, and even appeared disgusted by all his attempts to please her; his reign was past—his power no more!—the sudden impression to which her easy heart had yielded was quite extinguished by a stronger flame—that transient love which once she bore Augustus now warmed her bosom with a guilty passion!

The partial fondness of a father soon perceived this change in Leonora; with anxious sorrow he marked the settled gloom upon her brow;—that sweetness which once

gave

gave added graces to her beauty had yielded place to lowering diſcontent. The Baron ſtrictly ſcrutinized the conduct of his ſon, and could find no ſource for her diſpleaſure in the moſt unremitted attentions of a huſband. — He reproved her one day for an alteration of humour ſo extraordinary and unreaſonable — inſtead of the gentle timidity with which ſhe was accuſtomed to receive his admonitions, ſhe replied, with a ſpirit that aſtoniſhed him, that ſhe was of opinion the prerogative of a parent ceaſed when a huſband's reign commenced; to whom alone ſhe now conſidered herſelf accountable for any of her actions. — She quitted him at the cloſe

close of this speech, and left the good old man in a consternation not to be described!—He ordered his carriage, after deliberating a few moments, and repaired to the Chateau de Senanges, where he requested a private interview with Madame de St. Aubin. With tears he lamented this sudden and amazing alteration of temper in his daughter, whose mildness of disposition, and dutiful affection for him, had formed the most amiable traits of her character.—Madame de St. Aubin confessed that she had, with concern, made the same observation; and attributed a deportment so different from her gentleness of nature to the unfortunate

intimacy

intimacy she had contracted with the new Marchioness de Soissons. She warned him by all means to stop in its infancy the progress of an acquaintance which had already proved its dangerous influence over the unguarded heart of unsuspicious innocence. — The Baron returned home with a full resolution to follow Madame de St. Aubin's advice, and to prohibit any further intercourse with so deceitful a friend—but how was he chagrined to find that the young Viscountess had been set out for Paris half an hour before his arrival, in compliance with the request of the Marchioness de Soissons, who came herself to fetch her. He immedi-

ately

ately inquired whether Monſieur de St. Aubin had accompanied his daughter; but was informed that he was not yet returned from the chace, and that Madame was only attended by her woman and one domeſtic.

The Baron waited with impatience his ſon's return; who no ſooner entered than he expreſſed his diſatisfaction at the conduct of Leonora. The Viſcount, equally ſurpriſed and concerned at this extraordinary ſtep, attempted to vindicate an action his heart totally diſapproved:—but the Baron, too thoroughly exaſperated againſt her, told him that, though in pleading for his wife he proved his affec-

tion

tion and tenderneſs, yet regard for his own honour ſhould urge him to exert a proper ſpirit upon the occaſion, and to forbid the imprudent continuance of a friendſhip already ſo fatal in its effects. Monſieur de St. Aubin, convinced by theſe arguments, reſolved to ſet out the next morning to prevail upon Leonora to accompany him home. The Baron applauded his intention, and impatiently waited the expected return of his daughter. Monſieur de St. Aubin found his fair wife engaged in a crowd of company, who were fluttering round her toilet. The Chevalier de Soiſſons was the envied man who ſeemed honoured with her moſt peculiar notice;

tice; he was breathing adulation in her ear, when Monſieur de St. Aubin, being announced, inſtantly entered her dreſſing-room. Her countenance, which had been animated with the pride of beauty and the homage of its votaries, now became tinged with the glow of indignation, and her brow lowered with the frown of reſentment. The Viſcount affected a gay unconcern, ſaluted the company with his accuſtomed eaſe, and preſented to Leonora a letter from her father.—She half peruſed it; then, toſſing it careleſsly upon the toilet, ſhe told her woman to put the dull epiſtle by; and that, if ever ſhe found her in a moralizing humour, ſhe might re-

mind her of the inſipid leſſon, when it would be more efficacious than at preſent: then turning to her lord — "I find," ſaid ſhe, "that "you have been perſuaded by the "Baron de Neuville to expect my "return with you: tell him that "when I am weary of the joys of "public life, I ſhall fly to the "aſylum he generouſly offers me; "but, that I am poſitively ſo "tired of ſylvan ſcenes and do-"meſtic circles, that I ſhall remain "at preſent where I am." — The Chevalier de Soiſſons thought propriety now required his abſence: and, bowing to the Viſcounteſs and Marchioneſs, he took his leave, with a conceited ſhrug of the ſhoulders,

ſhoulders, and a ſarcaſtic ſmile at the latter. His example was followed by the whole train of petits maîtres, who formed this trifling group.—The Marchioneſs only remained—ſhe was departing; but a ſignificant nod from Leonora determined her to ſtay, even in defiance of the Viſcount's wiſh to be left alone with her friend, which he expreſſed by holding the door open in his hand for her to paſs. "See, Sir," ſaid Madame de St. Aubin, riſing and traverſing the room with agitation, "to what "your intruſion has expoſed me!—"you have ſucceeded in rendering "us both ridiculous: could no "other inſtant but the preſent have

" been favourable to the caprices
" of a father? How abſurd! to
" expect a young and married
" woman will ſubmit to the hu-
" mours of old age, and live im-
" mured in ſolitude, while youth,
" rank, and beauty, all combine
" to make the world delightful!—
" If you, Sir, have imbibed, from
" the Baron's arguments, ſuch ob-
" ſolete unnatural maxims, you
" will find yourſelf deceived and
" diſappointed; ſince I am reſolved
" to retrieve loſt pleaſures by
" partaking amply of every amuſe-
" ment from which I have hi-
" therto been ſecluded."—" In-
" deed," cried the Marchioneſs,
" it is high time Madame de St.

" Aubin

" Aubin ſhould be allowed a choice
" of her own; and ſhe cannot
" confer on me a greater obligation
" than by permitting me to intro-
" duce ſuch an ornament to the
" world."— " Madam," interrupt-
ed Auguſtus, " were the Viſcounteſs
" de St. Aubin of a birth and rank
" ſo obſcure as to require the coun-
" tenance of a lady who claims
" only from her title an imaginary
" equality with herſelf, then an in-
" troduction, even under the ſhadow
" of ſuch a wing, might reflect a
" ſuperficial honour. — But ſince
" Leonora de Neuville claims, by
" the blood from which ſhe ſprings,
" a reception in the moſt diſtin-
" guiſhed circles of the great,

"she needs no borrowed luſtre."—The rage of the Marchioneſs was too great for utterance — it ſpoke only in the vivid lightning of her eyes.—Auguſtus, turning to Leonora, thus proceeded: — "If you "have a wiſh to make ſome reſi- "dence in Paris, ſuffer me to pre- "pare a ſituation more eligible in "a habitation of your own: — re- "turn only with me to an expect- "ing father, and you ſhall com- "mand my actions and my for- "tune." — "No, Sir," replied Madame de St. Aubin with indignation, "I am reſolutely deter- "mined not to quit this houſe till "you have provided a manſion fit "for my reception.—The friend-

"ſhip

" ſhip of Madame de Soiſſons will
" more than compenſate the unrea-
" ſonable diſpleaſure of a father.—
" Farewell, Sir; the Marchioneſs's
" carriage waits; we are engaged—I
" excuſe my abrupt departure."—
She turned from him with an air of compoſed haughtineſs; and St. Aubin was ſo aſtoniſhed and confounded at her ſtubborn reſiſtance, that he permitted her to lead, and her companion to follow, without interruption: he therefore threw himſelf into his chariot, and returned overwhelmed with diſappointment to the retreat of the Baron, who, attracted by the rapid ſound of wheels, was looking from a window. — Unprepared for the

abſolute refuſal of his daughter, he had formed his naturally placid countenance into an awful frown to meet the beauteous fugitive: it was not diſpelled upon the Viſcount's informing him in the ſofteſt terms that he found Leonora ſo very anxious to continue a few days in Paris; he could not reſiſt her entreaties. The Baron ſhook his head — "Auguſtus," ſaid he, "you will repent this weakneſs; "ſhe impoſes on your eaſy nature, "and triumphs in her power;—but "believe me, in yielding againſt "your judgment to the extrava- "gant wiſhes of a wife, you hoard "up a future fund of wretchedneſs "for both!—Yet, if no perſuaſion

"will

"will prevail upon the refractory
"girl to return without absolute
"compulsion to this tranquil scene,
"I cannot see her innocence be-
"come the prey of so vitiated a
"woman as the Marchioness.—I
"will myself accompany you to
"Paris, when a house is procured
"fit for our reception.—Let us
"hasten, my son, to protect her
"virtue from the wily snares of
"vice, disguised under the mask
"of pleasure, and snatch her from
"destruction!" — The Viscount bowed a silent assent; the habitation of the Baron had charms for him, which he could not think of resigning without regret; yet his reason could not but approve of the

the propoſal: — the maître d'hôtel, therefore, was charged with the commiſſion of fixing upon an elegant houſe, completely furniſhed with the utmoſt diſpatch. — The next day the Count de Senanges and Madame de St. Aubin viſited the Baron: the Counteſs quitted not the beauteous widow, who, from motives of prudence rather than decorum, declined being of the party—ſhe could not ſhun without particularity the dangerous preſence of Auguſtus, at Senanges; but ſhe delicately reſolved, under pretence of a neceſſary retirement, during the firſt days of her mourning, to abſent herſelf even from the Baron's, and thereby to avoid

ſucceſſive

ſucceſſive meetings. — Madame de St. Aubin condoled with Monſieur de Neuville upon the poſitive diſobedience of their daughter, but endeavoured to tranquilize his ſpirits by the flattering prediction, that her reformation would be as rapid as her perverſion had been. She mentioned the deſign of the Count to remove ſpeedily to Paris with his family, which would naturally point out Madame de Senanges as the perſon to introduce the young Viſcounteſs with proper eclat; and that, by indulging her inclinations for gaiety within the reſtrictions of reaſon and innocence, it would be found leſs difficult to alienate her from the uneligible friendſhip

friendship of the artful Marchioness. Augustus heard, with an irresistible pleasure, that the object of his adoration was to be resident in Paris, during his attendance there upon his wife; and that, under pretence of paying his duty to his mother, he might sometimes be admitted into the presence of his Julia. In a week the Baron's hotel was in readiness for his reception, whence, accompanied by the Viscount, he set out for Paris; where, upon his arrival, he sent an immediate summons for Leonora, who was engaged in a large party to the theatre that evening. Provoked and mortified at an event for which she was yet unprepared,

she

she dispatched a message to her father, informing him that her avocations that day were so numerous she found it impossible to obey his commands till the afternoon, when she would not fail to pay her duty in her way to the new comedy. — The rage of the Baron is not to be described — his first impulse tempted him to fly instantly to the hôtel de Soissons, to load her with reproaches, and to insist upon her immediate return with him.

But the persuasions of Augustus (who by this time knew too well the irritating temper of his wife), prevailed upon him to wait with patience for her voluntary arrival.

—At

—At length she was announced, preceded by the Marchioness, without whose attendance, notwithstanding her acquired spirit, she wanted the courage to appear before her offended father. She endeavoured to assume an air of confidence; but, in spite of her effrontery, the dreaded presence of her venerable parent awed her tongue to silence. The Baron scarcely deigned a bow to her haughty and intruding companion; but, slowly approaching Leonora, he stood some minutes fixed in the sorrowful contemplation of her figure: —she had put off her mourning for the Marquis de Soissons (though Augustus still wore

the

the emblems of that grief his heart—so truly felt) and sparkled in jewels with every studied decoration of finished dress.

When the Baron had silently surveyed Madame de St. Aubin, who affected an air of ease and unconcern, overcome by the mingled emotions of grief, affection, and regret, he melted into tears—"Alas! my misguided child," he cried in broken accents, "could "I have once conceived that the "vanities of a false world would "have allured thee from a father, "and robbed me of my daughter?—Return, return to the "safe track of innocence from "which thy erring steps would

"lead

" lead thee — quit, quit the paths
" of fatal diſſipation which thou
" wilt find, too ſoon, are ſown with
" real thorns. — I have reſigned
" thee to the protection of a vir-
" tuous huſband — with him thou
" mayeſt ſecurely tread the walk of
" public life, ſpotleſs thy honour,
" unimpeached thy fame. — Can
" Leonora wiſh for any guide but
" her Auguſtus?—" If, Sir," replied
ſhe, reddening, " you allude to the
" preference I have diſcovered for
" the Marchioneſs de Soiſſons, I
" muſt be under the neceſſity of
" declaring ſolemnly that no in-
" fluence whatever is ſtrong enough
" to diſſolve a friendſhip immove-
" able as fate!—My obligations are
" inexpreſſible

"expreſſible—but for her I might "have ſtill continued buried in "oblivion, concealed in ſolitude, "and been denied the liberty which "free-born Nature claims.

"Releaſed from the long cap- "tivity of childhood, I am deter- "mined to aſſert the prerogative of "every wife, and to enjoy, unre- "ſtrained, the freedom to which "I am entitled."

"Heaven forbid," interrupted Monſieur de St. Aubin, taking her by the hand, which ſhe ſud- denly withdrew, "that my Leo- "nora ſhould find any unjuſtifiable "oppoſition to her pleaſures from "the reſtraints of a huſband who "is anxious to anticipate the wiſhes

" of her heart; and, in return for
" his attention, every mark of grate-
" ful duty to the moſt amiable, moſt
" generous of fathers, will be his
" beſt, his deareſt recompenſe.—
" The Baron de Neuville, far from
" obſtructing your introduction to
" the world, is ſtudying to pro-
" mote it with propriety — this
" houſe is prepared for you — he
" makes you miſtreſs of it. —
" The Counteſs de Senanges will
" ſoon arrive in Paris; ſhe will be
" happy to ſhare in your amuſe-
" ments." — " Hold, Sir," ex-
claimed Madame de St. Aubin,
" if I conſent to reſide here, in
" compliance with the rules of de-
" corum and propriety, it is not

" with

"with an intention of giving up
"thoſe parties and acquaintance
"which I prefer from choice.—
"Madame de Senanges is free to
"form her own ſelect ſociety—
"ſo am I;—nor ſhall I ſubmit to
"be dictated to, even by the Baron
"de Neuville!—But come, Ma-
"dame de Soiſſons," (turning to her ſilent champion, who ſeemed to enjoy, with a malicious pleaſure, the miſchief ſhe had cauſed) "we
"ſhall be late—I muſt entreat
"your pardon for the liberty I
"have taken in detaining you with
"my family diſputes."—"Adieu,
"Sir," turning to her father, "to-
"morrow you may depend upon
"my acquieſcing with your wiſhes
"—I ſhall

"—I shall then, in obedience to
"your commands, remove myself
"to this abode."—With these
words, curtsying ceremoniously,
she followed the Marchioness to
her carriage.—A profound silence
succeeded their departure. At
length the Baron, fixing his eyes
with emotion on Augustus, broke
into this exclamation:—"Is it
"possible!—can I give credit to
"my senses?—was that a daugh-
"ter he or could it be Leonora!
"Alas! I had a child!—who was
"the dearest comfort of my age!—
"the blush of innocence, the glow
"of artless beauty, bloomed on
"her cherub cheek!—the smiles of
"sweetness hung upon her tongue!

"—When I resigned her to thy
"arms, I thought I had bestowed
"upon thy virtues a treasure that
"would bless thee.—But, alas!
"I find she was born to curse
"both!—Monsieur de St.
Aubin attempted to console the
Baron, and to vindicate a conduct
which he attributed to flattered va-
nity, to thoughtless youth, and ill-
placed friendship. He promised to
guard, with watchful tenderness,
over her actions, and to dissuade
her, by every endearing art, from
pursuing in the society of Madame
de Sillons the path of ruin,—not
doubting but that the mild remon-
strances of true affection would
work upon her gentle nature, and

"—When

remove the fascinating bandage from her eyes.

The Baron took this opportunity to enter upon another subject very near his heart: his great soul could not support the idea that his family should take advantage of the late Marquis's generosity, by submitting to the acceptance of a legacy from such unworthy successors.—"Re-"sign, my Augustus," continued he, "a fortune you can never want "—let your obligations to that best "of men survive his existence "only in your memory.—Thanks "to heaven I have ample wealth "to make my children happy—"share it while I live—possess it "when I am no more!"

St.

St. Aubin, overcome with the Baron's generosity, sunk on one knee, and bedewed his hand with tears—"Oh, my father!" he cried, "a "forlaken outcast!—abandoned "even before my birth by my "own natural parent—how has "the guardian hand of Provi"dence watched over my helpless "infancy—guided my path of "youth—and, with each ill of life, "has mingled blessings;—even in "the hour when it deprived me "of the paternal care of one dear "protector, it ensured to me an"other not less worthy of my gra"titude and duty. The proposal "you have made, permit me to

"confess, has eased my mind of
"an inexpressible weight; since
"they are your sentiments I hesi-
"tate not to acknowledge they
"have long been mine. Excluded
"as I am from the succession of an
"hereditary patrimony, by the in-
"justice of my ancestors, the pride
"of birth yet animates my mind
"with conscious honour, which
"would prefer a noble poverty to
"a base dependence; nor would
"owe the riches equity might
"claim to the unwilling hand of
"avarice. An immediate restor-
"ation of a fortune, the acceptance
"of which has poignantly wounded
"my feelings, will complete my
"happiness: let my future obliga-

"tions

"cious be all confined to the
"boundless generosity of him who
"has honoured me with the name
"of son." The Baron tenderly embraced the Viscount, applauded his judgment; and it was decided that Augustus, on the succeeding day, should resign all pretensions to the late Marquis's liberality, by a public declaration. The sordid Soissons, to whose narrow soul a sentiment of delicacy and generosity was totally unknown, received with surprise, avidity, and transport, so welcome a proposal. He embraced Monsieur de St. Aubin, and expressed, for the first time in his life, some cordial wishes for his prosperity and happiness. Leonora

returned

returned to her husband and her father, with visible reluctance, secretly resolving not to be less frequent in her appearances in public. Not all the prohibitions of the Baron, nor the gentle remonstrances of Augustus, could prevail upon her to avoid the Marchioness; her obstinate friendship for that lady was assisted by a still stronger inclination — her fatal prepossession for Henry de Soissons daily increased. — Infatuated by an unresisted passion, every party in his absence was insipid; he was a constant attendant on his sister; he knew his power; and, by his insinuating attentions to the beauteous Leonora, fanned the conscious flame.

flame. Auguſtus ſoon diſcovered, notwithſtanding their caution in his preſence, the hitherto unſuſpected ſecret. He read, in the mutual language of their eyes, the fatal paſſion, but determined, though it increaſed his vigilance, to impoſe upon his lips eternal ſilence. His heart was too tenderly attached to the object of his early love to be ſenſible of a jealous wound from the idea of a rival; he felt, from ſad experience, the influence of reaſon could boaſt but little ſway over the irreſiſtible affections of the heart. Leonora, inſtead of exciting his reſentment, claimed his generous pity; and, confident that the native virtue of her mind ſecured her

honour,

honour, he contented himſelf with being prepared to defend her innocence from any advantage which Monſieur de Soiſſons might preſume to hope from the aſſurance of his conqueſt. But he was anxiouſly ſolicitous to conceal this diſcovery from the knowledge of the Baron, who would have received the intelligence with all the horror of a Roman father. Nicely tenacious of his houſe's honour, Auguſtus was well convinced that Monſieur de Neuville would treat with implacable ſeverity his unfortunate daughter; and might poſſibly, by confining her cloſely in the country, render her deſperate. In a few days the Count and Counteſs

teſs arrived at Paris, accompanied by the lovely widow and Madame de St. Aubin: the latter received an early viſit from the Baron, who informed her of the reſignation her ſon, with his approbation, had confirmed. She highly applauded a circumſtance which ſhe had herſelf moſt ardently wiſhed to take place, acquainting Monſieur de Neuville that ſhe had formed hopes of her ſon's alliance proving more worthy of his, by the acquiſition of a fortune to which he was the legal heir. She had made inquiries after Mademoiſelle de St. Aubin, who had ſucceeded on the deceaſe of her father to the whole eſtate and wealth of the late Viſcount; and, having

paſſed

paſſed in pleaſure and diſſipation a long term of years, ſhe had lately retired, diſguſted with the world, into a convent, to devote the remnant of her life to the duties of a religion whoſe precepts her whole conduct had openly diſavowed. The rumours of Monſieur de St. Aubin's diſcovered birth, and of his mother's having again reſumed that name, had ſpread through Paris; and there was no doubt but it would reach the ears of Amelia, which muſt prepare her for a claim that her much wronged ſiſter was reſolved to make. An unexpected opportunity ſoon offered itſelf for the execution of this juſt deſign.—Madame de St. Aubin was informed

formed on evening that a woman wiſhed to ſpeak with her upon buſineſs of importance to her family. Upon requeſting her to ſend her name, ſhe replied, with ſome heſitation, that it was now La Motte; but the lady could only recollect her by that of Nanette. A thouſand ſad ideas at this inſtant ruſhed into Madame de St. Aubin's mind, and recalled paſt ſcenes of miſery; but the hopes of making ſome intereſting diſcovery rendered her eager to admit her former domeſtic. She entreated Monſieur de Senanges to be preſent at the interview, and ordered her to appear.—Pale and trembling Nanette obeyed the ſummons, throwing herſelf at the

feet

feet of Madame de St. Aubin, who mildly requested her to rise. The poor creature, casting her eyes fearfully around, and perceiving the Count, rose precipitately, and returned to the door—"Ah!" cried she, "if that is the Viscount de "St. Aubin, indeed I cannot face "him!"—"It is not, upon my "honour," replied Madame de St. Aubin; "it is the Count de Se- "nanges; in whom I have so un- "reserved a confidence, that he "is entitled to be witness of every "circumstance relative to my fa- "mily. Reassure yourself, my "good Nanette, and rest satisfied "that, whatever discovery you may "be encouraged to make, no ad-

"vantage

"vantage whatever ſhall be taken
"againſt you: rely on my ſacred
"promiſe to reward and not to
"punish you." — "Ah!" replied
the weeping creature, "you were
"always too good, too kind to me,
"unworthy as I was! — But in-
"deed, indeed I had no bad inten-
"tion, and only did as I was bid.

"Well, Nancre," replied the lady, "I heartily forgive you;
"and only require you to make
"a reparation for any injury you
"may unintentionally have done
"me, by now diſcloſing every
"event concerning me and mine,
"in which you have been engaged,
"or thoſe under whoſe influence
"you were compelled to act."

The Count, obſerving her ſpirits almoſt exhauſted by the violence of her agitation, humanely placed a chair for her, and ordered ſome wine to be preſented, which revived her ſpirits ſufficiently to proceed as follows:

"When my mother and I, Ma-
"dam, were appointed to ſerve
"you at Belle-vue, Mademoiſelle
"de St. Aubin, by conſiderable
"preſents and promiſes, ſecured us
"to her intereſt; and we received
"her commands only to obey
"yours, as far as was conſiſtent
"with her pleaſure: — ſhe repre-
"ſented you to us as an ignomi-
"nious connexion to her brother's
"illuſtrious family; and the Vi-
"count's

" count's resentment confirming,
" in our opinion, this circum-
" stance, we imprudently imagined
" our submission to her was an act
" of duty.—My father, indeed,
" judged otherwise:—he said you
" were a sweet lady, and was
" ever extolling your beauty and
" condescension.—You may recol-
" lect, towards the time of your
" confinement, that my mother one
" day asked permission to visit a sick
" relation; you, Madam, kindly
" spared her, little imagining that
" her summons to Paris so nearly
" concerned yourself.—Mademoi-
" selle de St. Aubin having pri-
" vately sent for her, first bribing
" her to secrecy by a considerable

 " gratuity,

" gratuity, extorted from her a
" ſolemn, yet reluctant promiſe,
" that, if you had a ſon, we ſhould
" aſſure you that it died ſoon after
" its birth, and expoſe the infant,
" in a baſket, on the public road;
" where it was beyond a doubt
" but that ſome humane paſſenger
" would compaſſionately receive
" and nouriſh it.

" Barbarous woman! — How
" could a heart ſo hard expect a
' ſtranger to undertake a charge
" ſhe cruelly renounced!—My mo-
" ther at firſt ſtarted with horror at
" the propoſal! — but threats ope-
" rated more ſtrongly upon her
" fears than promiſes had upon
" her hopes, and overcame every
" ſcruple,

"ſcruple. — Mademoiſelle de St.
"Aubin repreſented to my mo-
"ther that a ſon would inherit the
"fortune of his grandfather, and
"conſequently deprive her of the
"expectations ſhe had formed from
"the partiality of the Viſcount, and
"the diſobedience of her brother.

"Theſe arguments at length
"convinced my mother that ſhe
"ſhould, in fulfilling Mademoi-
"ſelle de St. Aubin's injunctions,
"do a juſt and laudable action: ſhe
"promiſed every thing, and re-
"turned home determined to be
"guided implicitly by her com-
"mands.—She confided the ſecret
"with me, but inviolably kept it
"from my father, whoſe ſtrong

"attachment to your ſervice ſhe
"well knew would prevent and
"betray the ſcheme.

"When you were taken ill we
"had the precaution to ſend him
"on an errand to Paris, which
"would detain him a day and a
"night; and it was in that fatal
"expedition he had the misfortune
"to diſlocate his leg; which, by
"bringing on a low fever, ter-
"minated his life in a few weeks!

"As ſoon as your ſon was born,
"we took advantage of your in-
"ſenſibility to remove it to the
"moſt diſtant quarter of the houſe.
"—I accepted the charge of
"nurſing it till it could, with
"more ſafety, be diſpoſed of, ac-
"cording

" cording to the cruel commands of
" his unnatural [illegible] beauty
" and innocence [illegible] times
" tempted me to betray my trust,
" and the confidence placed in
" me:—but my mother carefully
" watched over my motions; and,
" indeed, I had no other method
" to provide for its protection,
" without risking the discovery of
" Mademoiselle de St. Aubin, and
" thereby incurring her certain ven-
" geance, both upon the unfortu-
" nate victim of her malice and
" myself.

" When my mother judged it
" might, without danger, be ex-
" posed to the charitable chance to
" which it was destined, she or-

" dered me to dreſs it plainly; and
" as your recovery was yet too du-
" bious for her to quit you with
" propriety, ſhe aſſigned to me the
" painful office of placing the dear
" infant where it could not be over-
" looked, and then deſerting it:—
" but, ſhrinking with horror at
" ſuch a thought, I determined
" not to return home till I had ſeen
" it in ſafe hands, whatever might
" be the conſequence.—Inſtead of
" dreſſing it as ſhe commanded, I
" choſe its richeſt robe, and a cap
" trimmed with the fineſt lace:—I
" encircled its waiſt likewiſe with a
" ribband, to which hung a gold
" coral, which I had found amongſt
" its clothes; flattering myſelf that

" theſe

" these evident tokens of distinc-
" tion might prove a benefit, and
" ensure its helpless innocence a
" kind protector.

" I tenderly kissed the little angel
" after it was dressed, and invoked
" heaven to preserve it.—I then
" fed it plentifully with milk and
" bread; and, lulling it into a
" deep slumber, hastened out of
" the house, left my mother should
" make her appearance, and disco-
" ver its ornaments.

" Reaching the road that led to
" Paris, I was very soon delivered
" from my precious charge: the
" sound of a carriage, and the
" distant view of a large retinue,
" determined me now to try the

" fate

" fate of my little nurſling.—I
" placed it by the ſide of a hedge,
" and, concealing myſelf behind,
" waited the event.—The noiſe of
" the wheels and horſes diſturbed
" the repoſe of the affrighted babe!
" its cries caught the attention
" of the firſt ſervant who reached
" the ſpot; he diſmounted,—and,
" lifting up the baſket, gazed at
" the child with viſible ſurpriſe.—
" Its pretty hands extended, ſeem-
" ed to implore the protection its
" innocence demanded.—By this
" time the equipage drove up,—a
" handſome gentleman was ſeated
" in it;—he ordered the coachman
" to ſtop; and, calling to the ſer-
" vant who ſtill held the baſket,

" he

"he took the infant in his arms,
"and seemed to smile on it with
"pleasure and compassion.
"Though I could not hear dis-
"tinctly what was said, I disco-
"vered that the babe was fortu-
"nately disposed of, and saw it
"received into the carriage, which
"drove rapidly from my sight.
"I made the best of my way home,
"transported with my success; —
"my mother was satisfied with my
"report, and applauded my dili-
"gence.—We both agreed in the
"opinion, that the better to pre-
"vent your mistrust of the child's
"death, (which nothing but our
"own conscious deception could
"suppose) we should construct an

"artificial

"artificial grave. Fortunately we "put the plan in execution, as you "were no sooner recovered than "you persisted in your demand of "being conducted to it.

"You, Madam, never suspected "the imposition, but mourned the "death of a living infant, whom "Providence meant one day to re-"store to your arms!—Thus, my "honoured mistress, have I at "length discharged my conscience, "and confessed how far I have been "guilty of the theft committed.— "Never have I enjoyed a mo-"ment's real undisturbed repose "since that period.—My mother "survived my father but two years. "—Madame de St. Aubin, to re-

"ward

" ward me, as she said, for my
" diligent and faithful services, but
" rather, I believe, to retain me
" securely in her interest, portioned
" and married me to her steward.—
" I have been the mother of seven
" children, but have had the mi-
" sery to lose them all.—A severe
" judgment from what heaven I
" offended in bereaving you of
" yours!—It is only within three
" days that I have learnt the won-
" derful discovery made in your
" family!—My joy, at the happy
" issue of an event which I
" have so long so truly deplored
" and repented of, had nearly
" killed me—I confessed my guilt
" to my astonished husband—he

" proposed

"propoſed to wait upon you with
"my depoſition;—but I could not
"reſiſt the ſtrong inclination I felt
"to acknowledge, at your injured
"feet, the part I acted in this myſ-
"terious affair.—Mademoiſelle de
"St. Aubin is, I believe, no longer
"ignorant of your wonderful re-
"union with your ſon:—ſhe has
"commanded my attendance at
"the convent whither ſhe is re-
"tired; but I was determined to
"make theſe diſcoveries to you
"before I encountered her pre-
"ſence, that I might inform her
"of the irrevocable confeſſion I
"had made."

Madame de St. Aubin, who had
ſhed ſome tender tears during her
"recital,

recital, to the memory of past interesting events, instead of reproaching Nanette for those pains she had taken, generously assured her she regarded her as the preserver of her son, and felt herself under the strongest obligations for the precautions she had taken for his safety in the affair she was forced to commit; more particularly she expressed her gratitude for her having distinguished her son by the coral, without which the authenticity of his birth would have been confirmed with difficulty.

Madame de St. Aubin added, that the discovery Nanette had made should never injure herself or her family, since she would make such

such provision for them as would amply recompense any loss she might sustain from the resentment of her patroness. She promised likewise to introduce her to her son, who, she was certain, would not be ungrateful to his nurse.

Madame de St. Aubin, accompanied by the Count, repaired, after her departure, to the Baron de Neuville, to consult with him and Augustus upon the best method to pursue with his cruel aunt; but a letter, which was delivered to his astonished mother, soon convinced them that they had no difficulties to apprehend from a dying penitent.—It contained the following lines:—

"Though

"Though the name of Amelia
"de St. Aubin must be hateful to
"the remembrance of the sister
"she has wronged, she still hopes
"for pardon from the widow of
"her unfortunate brother. Stretch-
"ed on the bed of sickness, and
"hovering on the brink of the
"grave, she implores to be ho-
"noured with the presence of
"Madame de St. Aubin, only
"to restore, through her hands,
"that inheritance to an injured
"nephew of, which her crimes
"have too long deprived him."

Madame de St. Aubin mast-
ed into tears. "Alas!" said
she, "unfortunate Amelia! may
"heaven forgive as readily as

"I do.—The juſtice of Providence "repays our wrongs, till I had "recovered the bleſſing I had loſt "ſo long, my heart never murmured at the deprivation before. I alone reproached myſelf "for the eſtranged affections of a "huſband, and that fatal death "which was its early conſequence."

Madame de St. Aubin was too ſtrongly affected, and felt too great an agitation, to write a reply—but, admitting the ſteward into her preſence, who was the bearer of Amelia's letter, ſhe charged him to aſſure his miſtreſs that ſhe would attend her the next day, and hoped to find her mended in her health, and tranquil in her ſpirits.

She

"you, and declares her soul will
"be eternally lost if she lives not
"to receive your pardon.—Then
"she talked about an infant and a
"murdered brother." —"Poor
"Amelia," interrupted Madame
de St. Aubin, strongly touched by
this account, "thank heaven thou
"hast no crimes of such a nature
"to repent of: absolute guilt is a
"stranger to thy bosom. But come,
"dear sister," (to the nun) "shall
"I not be conducted to the cham-
"ber of this poor sufferer?" St.
Agnes bowed in silence, and led
the way.—The door of the apart-
ment was gently opened.—St. Ag-
nes advanced to the bed, and whis-
pered;—a weak voice replied.—

"Ah, my God! now is my firſt "dreadful trial! how ſhall I ſup- "port her injured face;—alas! ſhe "was once my friend!"—"And is "ſo ſtill," cried Madame de St. Aubin; "witneſs theſe unfeigned "tears—witneſs my bleeding heart! "—Look up, Amelia! view thy "Adelaide!"—As ſhe drew near enough to diſcover the emaciated form which reſted on the bed, ſhe ſtarted back with horror—diſeaſe ſeemed to have added to her age at leaſt twenty years!—Her diminiſhed eyes were almoſt buried in their hollow ſockets; and the ſhrunk ſkin ſcarce covered the ſtarting bones. It is true, Madame de St. Aubin expected not to find the

vivid bloom which once adorned her cheek — She only thought to find the veſtiges of beauty: but not a trace ſurvived to tell the tale of former youth. Amelia perceived the emotions of ſurpriſe and horror: "Generous Adelaide!" ſhe faintly uttered; "you ſhould have been "prepared for the miſerable ſpec-"tacle which ſhocks your gentle "ſpirits. Mark, in the ſtate to "which I am reduced, the dire "effects of complicated guilt! "Conſcience — that judge which "never long can ſleep — aiding the "ravage of conſuming ſickneſs, "has changed me to what you "now behold! while time reſtores "you to my remembrance, with

"every

" every recollected feature; inno-
" cence has preserved the relics of
" a countenance, which neither the
" trials of adversity nor slow ad-
" vances of age have yet mate-
" rially impaired.—That smile of
" sweet benevolence, which graced
" your blooming youth, still dwells
" upon your looks, and generously
" proclaims my pardon.—Instead
" of the just reproaches I have
" merited, like a kind angel, you
" bring comfort to my departing
" soul!—Yes, comfort and pity to
" the wretch who, violating every
" sacred tie of honour and of kin-
" dred, pursued your patient vir-
" tues with unnumbered wrongs."

—" Talk not of wrongs, my dear
Amelia,"

"Amelia," interrupted her ſiſter, "my preſence would be a barba-"rous inſult, did I not come ſolely "to aſſure you of my warmeſt "friendſhip." — "Ah," cried the ſick penitent, "wound not my "heart with that profaned expreſ-"ſion! your friendſhip having ſo "cruelly betrayed, I never can de-"ſerve — but your forgiveneſs my "repentance claims; and I thank "that all-merciful Being, before "whom I ſhortly muſt appear, that "my contrition is ſincere and fer-"vent! Behold the ſole remain-"ing method in my power to be-"come juſt to that dear ſon, whom "my guilt has hitherto deprived "of his inheritance," preſenting a

ſealed

ſealed packet to Madame de St.
Aubin, ſhe thus in broken ſen-
tences continued — "The wealth
"a father left, as he believed, to
"the laſt ſurviving heir, is here
"bequeathed to him, or rather is
"reſigned; ſince, were it poſſible
"for me to live, I have left my-
"ſelf dependent on his mercy, and
"ſhould become the wretched ob-
"ject of his charity, diſpoſſeſſed
"of my own fortune, as well as of
"thoſe immenſe poſſeſſions I have
"too long uſurped. My heart
"yearns with tenderneſs for the
"much-wronged youth. — Oh,
"plead my pardon with this belov-
"ed ſon! Could I have dared to
"hope he would commiſerate ſuch

"a wretch,

"a wretch, I would have entreated
"a condescending visit: to have
"traced in him the features of an
"unfortunate brother, would have
"forbad the horrors of approach-
"ing death, and yielded a painful
"satisfaction to this repentant
"heart." "Then," exclaimed
Madame de St. Aubin, "those
"wishes are within your reach, he
"is actually here, and only waits
"permission to attend you."—
"Excellent young man!" replied
Amelia, "the goodness of his
"heart, in accompanying you to
"the abode of his greatest enemy,
"assures me of his forgiveness:
"entreat for me his presence, and
"let me indulge my eyes before
"they

"they close for ever with a brother's dear surviving image!"—

Madame de St. Aubin descended hastily to fetch her son, prepared him for the pity-moving spectacle, and introduced him to his dying aunt.—Amelia had requested to be raised, and supported by her pillows: strong agitations convulsed her frame, and, for a few moments, she was deprived of the power of utterance. An interval of calm succeeded—she extended her emaciated arms to Augustus, who understood the sign, suffered her to embrace him; the drops of soft humanity wrung from his feeling heart, fell upon her cheek. A ghostly smile illumined her haggard eyes

eyes—she loosed her feeble hold—she cast a grateful look to heaven—faintly articulated "I am forgiven, "—I am happy!"—and, sinking on her pillow, instantly expired.

A scene so mournful, and a death so sudden, awfully affected Monsieur and Madame de St. Aubin. Augustus supported his trembling mother, and hurried her from the breathless corse of Amelia. The Count de Senanges felt no less shocked at an event, little expected to take place so soon. The nuns crowded about Madame de St. Aubin, offering her many officious consolations:—the abbess sent her a complimental message, but was herself too much indisposed to admit

an interview. At length, becoming tolerably recovered, she was attended to the carriage by her kind companions, and set out on her return to Paris. The spirits of this amiable woman had been so much affected by the presence and death of a sister, for whom she entertained the tenderest friendship, that she was some time confined to her chamber. There she shed fresh tears to the revered remembrance of her beloved husband, whose injurious conduct never could estrange him from her affections. During this interval, the steward of the late Viscount attended his new lord, who was soon fixed in the secure possession of the inheritance of his ancestors.

ancestors; but he was dead to every pleasure fortune could bestow, and sighed in the lap of affluence his disappointed love. Deeply, however, as he was sensible of the incurable wound, which, with a slow and baneful poison, undermined his happiness, yet he was true to the sacred ties of honour, and neglected no attentions to a wife who treated him with the coldest indifference and ingratitude. Neither parental authority, nor conjugal affection, could recall the deluded Leonora from the fatal paths of dissipation.—She was still the inseparable companion of Madame de Soissons.—Play consumed their successive nights, and their days were

were spent in that disturbed repose which is ever the attendant of late hours, and an incessant round of vanity. But too soon remorseless fate snatched from the world, in her full career of gaiety, this fair votary of pleasure!

YOUTH, BEAUTY, WEALTH, and GREATNESS, all availed not, to rescue from the grave the lovely victim! Madame de St. Aubin was seized with a malady, which put an early period to her life! the ninth day, after being attacked with a virulent small-pox, closed in eternal sleep those radiant eyes which had obtained unnumbered conquests. In her intervals of reason the suffering of her body worked

worked the moſt happy reformation in her mind: they diſpelled from her ideas the temptations of a ſublunary ſtate—recalled the dormant virtues of her ſoul, and prepared it for the awful change ſhe was about to make! The ſolemn criſis of impending death placed in a far different light thoſe deceptions of vanity and tranſitory pleaſures which had intoxicated her young heart. — The world receded from her view, and ſhe ſeemed to regret life only as its ſhort remains allowed not ſufficient ſpace for her contrition. The ardour of her devotion was exemplary; and her reſignation to her fate, from a firm reliance on the mercies of her God,

truly

truly affecting!—She took a tender farewel of her furrounding friends, entreated they would not mourn her loſs, but expreſſed her wiſhes that, while they generouſly pardoned all her errors, they rather would rejoice at her removal from a world whoſe allurements had eſtranged her heart from thoſe endearing duties and connexions ſhe had ſo ill requited:—the names of her huſband and her father were the laſt intelligible words ſhe articulated, and Auguſtus received from her expiring eye the laſt ray of departing reaſon.———

This amiable man, whoſe attentions during her illneſs, and anxiety for her recovery, could not

have been exceeded even towards the wife of his choice, was ſenſibly touched by her ſudden fate!—With undiſſembled tears he mourned her death, and tenderly regretted her premature removal from a world to which ſhe had been too fondly attached!—In contemplating the ghaſtly form, once glowing with animated beauty, how does the thinking mind moralize upon the vanity of ſhort-lived pleaſures!—The grief, the anguiſh, of the good old Baron, is not to be deſcribed:—that parent-heart alone can ſympathize with ſuch ſenſations which has experienced ſuch a loſs!—The revival of his daughter's virtues obliterated the impreſſion of her

her failings!—he remembered only the beauties of her form, the graces of her mind!—nor could all his philoſophic reſolution ſupport, with fortitude, this unexpected ſtroke of fortune!—He felt bereaved of every ſocial joy, the promiſed comfort of his drooping years!—deſerted and forlorn!—Thus the fair blooming branches, cropped from the venerable tree, leave its poor trunk, unſheltered, to the rude elements and boiſterous tempeſt!—Scarce could the gentle force of friendſhip drag this heart-ſtricken parent from the deformed remains of what was once his daughter!—Fixed like a ſtatue, he gazed upon her face!—then ſmote his aged

breaſt, and, with a ſmile of anguiſh, thus exclaimed —

"Yes, all-gracious heaven! — "it is paſt! — The only tie of na- "ture, that remained to attach to "life a poor old man, is now diſ- "ſolved! — Life has no more a "charm, nor death a pang, for "me! — Oh, thou! who lately "wert ſo fair, ſo ſweet, ſo lovely! "— thou art fled for ever! — the "ravages of ſickneſs have defaced "thy beauties, and left thee a "ſpectacle of horror! — Oh, my "child! my child! — I hoped in "thee to have ſurvived ſucceeding "ages! — and to have tranſmitted "to a blooming offspring my di- "vided wealth! — Thou ſhouldſt

"have

"have closed a father's eyes; but
"he, unnatural doom! was des-
"tined to close thine! — Yet we
"shall meet again! — and Heaven,
"in snatching thee so early, has
"shortened our term of separation.
"Yes, beauteous seraph! thou
"art only gone before to smooth
"the rugged path of death, and
"be my gentle herald to a world
"where we shall unite to part no
"more!" — Thus did the afflicted parent vent his soul's anguish; neither, when borne from this scene of desolation, did his piercing lamentation cease — still he addressed the invisible object of his sorrows, till, overwhelmed with grief, he sunk into a silent stupor.

The Marchioneſs de Soiſſons, who had ſo frequently experienced the ſtrong force of Madame de St. Aubin's attachment, now proved the ſickleneſs of her own friendſhip, and the inſenſibility of her heart. Though ſhe had long paſſed the dangerous diſorder that had been ſo fatal to the poor Viſcounteſs, ſhe did not once attempt a perſonal inquiry or friendly viſit.—Sickneſs and mortality were ſubjects too ſerious for her reflections. Devoid of every tender ſentiment which melts to ſympathy the feeling mind —a friend expiring was to her a friend no more!—Even when informed of Madame de St. Aubin's death at the card-table, ſhe received

the account with savage unconcern, and indifferently said; "It is fortunate she did not survive her "boasted beauty; to live, and be a "a fright, is still more horrible "than death itself!"—On this unworthy woman had the ill-fated Leonora lavished all her bounty; and, for her sake, estranged herself from real friendship.

With what different sentiments were Julia, Henrietta, and Madame de St. Aubin, inspired! Totally as Leonora had neglected them since her introduction to that bane of her happiness, yet their affection for her was undiminished; her danger awakened all their former partiality—they proved the

tendereſt nurſes in her fatal illneſs, and ſcarcely ever quitted her apartment till the laſt ſigh of expiring life ſadly proclaimed their gentle offices no longer neceſſary!—The feeling heart of Julia had watched, with attentive tenderneſs, the progreſs and every turn of this fatal diſtemper; and, touched moſt ſenſibly at Leonora's fate, ſhe mourned her rival's death with all the energy of friendſhip.

Scarce were Madame de St. Aubin's eyes cloſed for ever, ere ſhe felt the propriety of removing from a manſion where the newly-acquired freedom of a lover might expoſe her to a renewal of thoſe attentions which delicacy and prudence diſ-

allowed

allowed at this juncture as forcibly as ever!—She would not trust herself to behold the first emotions of that regret she knew the generous heart of Augustus must experience when he was convinced that hope was fled, and his unfortunate wife no more!—She left him to the consolation of his surrounding friends; and, in the midst of the general grief and consternation, passed unobserved to the carriage that waited for her; and returned home to indulge, in solitude, those tears which were due to the memory of a departed friend!—When the remaining mourners were collected around the afflicted husband and distracted father, the eyes of the former

vainly

vainly and involuntarily fought for that dear object, whose influence alone could ſooth a diſtreſs which derived its ſource rather from ſympathetic pity than affection. Senſible of the cold indifference with which he had been long regarded by his miſguided wife, he had not the aggravation of accuſing conſcience to enhance his ſorrow — his regret was unattended by the ſting of remorſe — he ſighed the untimely fate of youth and beauty — he wept her ſufferings — but the reſtoration of his liberty ſhed an imperceptible ſweetneſs over his grief, which rendered it ſupportable. — Julia was abſent; but her loved idea mingled with that of the breathleſs Leonora;

pose;—she judged the delicate motive of her departure, and approved the conduct that mortified his wishes.—To the heart struck father this amiable son now turned all his attention.—he approached the venerable mourner.—for some moments silence prevailed.—grief melted in the eloquent eyes of Augustus.—the Baron pressed him in his arms!—"Ah!" cried he, in a tremulous voice, "did I presume "to accuse Omnipotence of being "totally bereft!—Ungrateful pa- "rent!—thou hast still a child!— "dear relict of my Leonora!— "come to my heart, and share it "with her memory!"

It

It was recommended to Monſieur de St. Aubin, by his friends, to remove the Baron, as ſoon as poſſible, from a habitation which daily renewed and fed his anguiſh. The hotel of the late Viſcount was now ready to receive him; yet it was not without difficulty Monſieur de Neuville could be perſuaded to change his abode.—Julia obſerved a ſtrict retirement at home, and never ſaw Auguſtus but at the houſe of her brother: and there ſhe ſtudiouſly avoided every opportunity of finding herſelf an inſtant alone with him:—her penetrating lover obſerved and ſecretly reproached her cruelty:—his paſſion, no longer reſtrained by the ties of duty, was determined

determined to ſurmount every perplexing obſtacle of feminine decorum; reſolving, in defiance of its rigid dictates, to aſſert his former claims, and plead the cauſe of love.

One day, when all, excepting the Marchioneſs, were aſſembled at the Viſcount's, he ſtole unperceived away, and flew to the Hotel de Senanges, informing the porter he had brought a meſſage to Madame de Soiſſons — he waited not to be announced, but haſtily aſcended the ſtaircaſe; he traverſed the gallery that led to her dreſſing-room; and, when he reached the antichamber, he ſtopped for a few moments, to recover from the perturbation of his ſpirits, before he could aſſume

courage

courage to appear in the dreaded presence of his Julia: he ſtood irreſolute whether to advance or to retreat.—Hope at length prevailed over his timidity, and he gently tapped at the door:—a ſilver voice ſweetly commanded him to enter;—with trembling emotion he turned the obedient lock—the ſpring flew open at his touch, and diſcovered the object of his adoration employed in ſhading ſome beautiful embroidery. The needle dropped from her fair fingers—ſhe ſtarted up—her cheek was overſpread with ſudden bluſhes!—Surpriſe and diſpleaſure animated her countenance, and perplexed her boſom: in an inſtant Auguſtus was at her feet—

"Forgive,

"Forgive, my adorable Julia," he cried, "the presumption of a man "who cannot exist without be- "holding you!" —"And is it "thus," interrupted the Marchioness haughtily, "my privacy is to be "interrupted?—what privilege en- "titles the Viscount de St. Aubin "to invade a solitude which is my "choice, and should be sacred?"— "The privilege of truth and love!" replied he.—"Never frown not, "loveliest of women!—obscure "not the heavenly beauties of that "brow by killing scorn!—but "listen, with gracious pity, to a "suit which claims at least the at- "tention of my Julia—alone con- "sent to hear me—and I will obey

"your

"your cruel doom, and instantly
"retire, if you command it!"—
She was distressed—a look of irre-
solute tenderness and sorrow encou-
raged him to proceed—"Alas! can
"those sentiments with which I
"once was honoured be effaced?—
"Is there no pleader in a heart
"which was acknowledged mine
"by every tie of sympathy!—No
"longer can you coldly urge the
"claims of duty—implicitly have
"we both obeyed its tyrant dic-
"tates—they are now dissolved—
"restored to mutual freedom, our
"plighted hands are free to form
"the union which fate has hi-
"therto so cruelly obstructed.—
"Ah, Julia!—thou art silent!—
"thy

"thy averted eyes, and that fore-
"boding sigh, plant daggers in
"my breast! — It is past! — I am
"forgotten! — thy faithless heart,
"and thy perfidious hand, re-
"nounce me! — Inconstant Julie —
"wretched — wronged Augustus!"

"Ah, barbarous man!" uttered the Marchioness, bursting into tears — "how have I merited these
"reproaches? — My heart, incapa-
"ble of change, refused its ten-
"derest affections to a husband
"worthy of them; substituting
"cold gratitude in return for
"generous love: and, ere the
"mournful tributes due to his
"honoured memory are paid, my
"ears are wounded with unhal-

allowed passion, and the ill-timed upbraiding of an ungrateful lover?—Ah, Augustus! where is "that sensibility, where that delicacy of sentiment, which first "impassioned the heart of Julia?— "Scarce is thy Leonora cold in "earth, ere thou hast suffered thy "newly absolved vows to breathe "their wantonness in a widowed "ear!"—She moved with emotion to the window; he still continued on his knees, and thus addressed her—"Hear me, thou soul of all "my hopes and wishes!—Pardon "the mad presumption of a lover "urged by the frenzy of despairing "passion!—Never will I profane "again thy charming constancy

"by

"by one reproach. Oh, pity and
"forgive a wretch, who long has
"been the sport of fortune. Torn
"from my arms, even when mer-
"cherous fate seemed ready to
"unite us, I dread a second se-
"paration! — Shunned by the ob-
"ject whom my heart adores, pro-
"phetic fears have agonized my
"mind! — but I should have known
"the soul of Julia incapable of
"perfidy! — Come then, inspiring
"hope, soft peace, and animating
"joy! — sweet soothers of the
"pangs of timid love! — Far be
"the presumption from me to re-
"quest thy hand, till thou hast
"sacrificed to customary forms the
"fixed time! — Sacred to the me-

"mory of that exalted man, by
"every due reſpect! But ah, my
"Julia! can the moſt rigid virtue
"deny one gracious ſmile — one
"bleſt aſſurance that I yet am dear
"to her who reigns triumphant in
"my faithful breaſt?" ——

She turned to him; — a look of ineffable ſweetneſs arrayed her countenance, a beam of radiance brightened her tear-full eye. — Extending her hand with an inexpreſſible grace, which diminiſhed not that modeſt dignity inſeparable from all her actions — "Receive once more," ſaid ſhe, "moſt amiable of men, the faith-"ful vows of Julia: — they are "thine by merit and by right. —

"I diſclaim

"I diſclaim deceit and affectation,
"as arts unworthy of us both.—
"When, therefore, theſe ſubdued en-
"ſigns of unfeigned regret ſhall
"have fulfilled their tributary te-
"timonies of gratitude to the re-
"membrance of a huſband, no
"longer will I oppoſe the ſuit of
"conſtancy and love."—The tranſported Auguſtus received with rapture ſo charming a confeſſion: "Propitious ſounds," he cried, "of promiſed bliſs! Oh, happieſt "moment of relenting fate! never "till now did my adoring heart "a joy experience unallayed by "pain.—Thou art then mine—ec-"ſtatic thought!—by vows irrevo-"cably breathed from thine own

 "generous,

"generous, all-perſuaſive lips; and "pitying Heaven permits and ratifies the promiſed union, ſo long, "ſo cruelly protracted!"—Glowing with ſoft confuſion, Julia beheld the tranſports of Auguſtus; and, gently checking them by an awful beam from her expreſſive eye, ſhe, with her wonted delicacy, requeſted him to quit her, and to conform to her irrevocable law, which permitted her not to receive his private viſits. He promiſed perfect ſubmiſſion to her commands; and, ſatisfied with her generous avowal, he reluctantly withdrew, and returned to his hotel before he had been miſſed by the family party he had left.

When

When the Marchioness found herself alone, she fell into the most pleasing train of reflections she had been capable of indulging since she had compelled herself to act in obedience to a father. — She had at once the sweet consciousness of having supported a blameless conduct as a wife and daughter; and the delightful prospect of rewarding a lover's constancy, by uniting herself to the early object of her affections.—She was agreeably absorbed in the soothing indulgence of these sweet ideas, when Madame de St. Aubin and her sister returned home. An air of soft serenity overspread her countenance, and

her eyes beamed with unuſual anſmation.

"Your ſilent contemplations, "my dear Julia," ſaid the Countess, "muſt have been very pleaſ-"ing; and if you would not chide "me for my obſervation" (with an arch ſmile) "I could affirm that "there is a ſympathy between the "ſouls of abſent lovers. Auguſtus "has at this moment an expreſſion "in his looks which beſpeaks a "heart at eaſe:—the gloom of in-"quietude has forſaken his brow, "and on your's I trace no longer "penſive ſadneſs:—ſome magic "ſpirit has inſpired you both." Julia's cheek was tinged with con-

ſcious

ſcious bluſhes—"Ah," cried ſhe, in an embarraſſed accent, "Auguſ-
"tus has betrayed me—ſuch are
"the arts of falſe diſſembling men!
"—give but a lover hope, and
"caution is no more. He intruded
"into my preſence—upbraided me
"with cruelty—ſighed—entreated,
"wept,—by the ſoft wiles of pity-
"moving love melted my eaſy
"heart to weakneſs: and, when
"compaſſionating his ſufferings I
"deigned to promiſe him my
"plighted hand, as the juſt recom-
"penſe of long-tried faith, he diſ-
"honourably boaſts in my extorted
"vows the triumph he has gained!
"—but he ſhall feel the force of
"my revenge." — Half ſerious,

half

half ſmiling, ſhe concluded theſe words, the Counteſs looking ſignificantly at Madame de St. Aubin, "Ah, Madam," ſaid ſhe, "have we not made an intereſting diſcovery?—No, my charming ſiſter, you are your own betrayer; Auguſtus kept to himſelf his hoarded joy, nor profaned the ſacred confidence you had repoſed in him."—The confuſion of the Marchioneſs prevented her replying to the raillery of her delighted ſiſter. The Count de Senanges, upon his entrance, was ſoon made acquainted with the ſubject of their converſation, and the little incident which had occaſioned it. He told the Marchioneſs that ſhe had

had sacrificed her sentiments too long to a decorum, which even the exalted delicacy of her character did not require, as her former engagements with his friend might have claimed an earlier confession of her unshaken faith to so amiable, so constant a lover. Julia suffered herself to be convinced by these persuasive arguments, and permitted her Augustus to indulge with less restraint the flattering hopes of his approaching happiness. Some months elapsed in this situation, and the period of the lovely widow's mourning drew near. The enraptured Augustus beheld its advance with all the enthusiasm of love. Monsieur de

Neuville,

Neuville, who felt for him the tenderest affection, began to wish that he might see this amiable son happily engaged in a second union, before he himself was summoned to pay the expected debt of Nature. Augustus had long meditated an avowal of his former passion for the Marchioness; yet the delicacy of his regard to the memory of Leonora constantly opposed the disclosure of his sentiments to her respected father. Monsieur de Senanges would have undertaken the friendly office of divulging a circumstance that could not but be painfully repugnant to the sensibility of the Viscount; but he considered it as absolutely incumbent

on

on his honour to unfold himself the confidential secret. Week after week elapsed before he could assume resolution to introduce a subject which must renew the sad remembrance of Leonora's fate: but an opportunity at length offered itself for this desired yet dreaded eclaircissement. The Baron was one day gratefully acknowledging the attentions of Monsieur de St. Aubin—"I feel for you, Augustus," said the good old man, "the same "degree of parental regard as if "Nature had formed you mine:— "equally interested in your happiness, as if I could claim the "honour of your birth, it is the "dearest object of my heart to see

"you

"you united to a woman worthy
"of you: enough have you sacri-
"ficed to the memory of my poor
"departed child; — it pleased
"Heaven to snatch her from your
"arms, even in the dawn of mar-
"riage. — But for virtues such as
"yours Providence has full in store
"a sweet reward in some fair part-
"ner of your cares. — Few indeed
"have merits equal to your own;
"but, would you allow an old
"man's judgment, I could point
"out *one* lovely woman in whom
"is centered every feminine per-
"fection. — Julia de Soiffons has
"a form charming as beauty's
"self, and a mind replete with
"every excellence. I have traced

"her

"her exalted conduct in the repa-
"rate characters of daughter,—
"wife,—and widow:—in the first
"I am not ignorant that she sacri-
"ficed the tenderest sentiment,
"in obedience to a father, who
"blushed not to dower her bloom
"with age. In the second how
"conspicuously shone her exem-
"plary conduct!—in the last how
"has she, by the strict restirement
"she has observed, at a season, and
"in a situation, so seducing to
"youth, rank, and beauty, proved
"the most delicate respect to the
"memory of her husband!—You
"are worthy of each other. Speak,
"my Augustus, are you sufficiently
"sensible

"ſenſible of ſuch attractions to "offer her your hand and heart?" "—Ah, Sir," replied the Viſcount, agitated with a variety of ſtrong emotions—"your tender intereſt "in my happineſs demands, and "merits all my confidence!—My "heart is opening to your view; "and the impartial confeſſion I "am going to make will ſoon con- "vince you how little difficulty "will be found in my compliance." He then in few words related to the Baron the commencement, progreſs, and diſappointment, of his paſſion for the Marchioneſs. The amiable father applauded his ingenuity, and aſſured him that

his

his merits were, if poſſible, greatly raiſed in his opinion from the tenderneſs he had ſhewn to Leonora, who he never ſuſpected had not been the firſt and *only* object of his choice.—He had indirectly heard the affections of Julia were engaged before her reluctant marriage with the Marquis, but had never arrived at the name of her acknowledged lover.

The Baron, delighting in the proſpect of ſeeing two ſuch matchleſs characters united, requeſted that he might be indulged with the diſtinction of preſenting the hand of the incomparable Julia to her beloved Auguſtus; which having done, he ſhould then ſink to that

grave in peace that would rejoin him to his lamented child!

The exemplary conduct of the Marchioneſs, even to the laſt inſtance, remembered the dictates of filial duty; nor would ſhe form even a ſecond engagement without the ſanction of a father. Her application was crowned with the ſucceſs ſhe wiſhed;—it followed him to the court of Spain:—but the Duke de Gramont, impregnable to the ſofter feelings of human nature, expreſſed no intereſt in the happineſs of his charming daughter. The total indifference he had ſhewn for Julia, ever ſince her birth, continued, even after her union with the Marquis;

and

and he had neglected inquiries of her welfare ſince his deceaſe.—He now yielded a cold approbation; adding that ſhe was for the future at liberty to rule her own conduct, without any reference to him.—Every obſtacle being now removed, and propriety no longer oppoſing the wiſhes of Auguſtus, Julia conſented to beſtow upon her faithful lover the invaluable hand which was deſtined to complete his bliſs. The recompenſe of perſevering virtue crowned their faithful loves:—the ſofteſt chain of Hymen wove the indiſſoluble knot!—They who had combated ſo nobly with adverſity, and ſacrificed to honour the tendereſt of paſſions, were capable

pable of tasting, from the refinement of their sentiments, the most sublime delight that springs from mutual constancy!

Thus did this incomparable pair exhibit to the world an example of happiness unequalled by the most celebrated patterns of conjugal union, immortalized in the long annals of recorded TIME!

MVSEVM BRITANNICVM

THE END.

ERRATA in VOL. II.

Page	Line	
38	1	*for* in different *read* indifferent.
50	11	*for* borne *read* born.
88	10	*for* confidante *read* confidant.
108	7	*for* inconstand *read* inconstant.
114	14	*for* dependent *read* dependant.
152	8	*for* preferred *read* prefered.
198	1	*insert* were *after* eyes.
204	12	*for* she *read* he.
235	19	*omit an* l *in* allieviate.
240	18	*omit the* e *in* immovable.
243	3	*read* I prefer *for* is free.
287	14	*and* 15 *for* being attacked with *read* the attack of.
317	8	*omit the first* c *in* ecclaircissement.

ERRATA IN VOL. II.

Page	Line	
7	1	For [illegible] read [illegible].
13	11	For [illegible] read [illegible].
18	19	For [illegible] read [illegible].
113	3	For [illegible] read [illegible].
114	14	For [illegible] read [illegible].
119	3	For [illegible] read [illegible].
198	1	For [illegible] read [illegible].
204	11	For [illegible] read [illegible].
215	13	For [illegible] read [illegible].
244	12	For [illegible] read [illegible].
273	8	For [illegible] read [illegible].
289	14	For [illegible] read [illegible].
317	3	For [illegible] read [illegible].